

# AFRICAN STUDIES

(Formerly Bantu Studies)

VOLUME 5. No. 1; MARCH 1946

---

## THE CLAN ORGANIZATION AND KINSHIP SYSTEM OF SOME SHONA TRIBES

By W. H. STEAD

The African people who live in the Charter District of Southern Rhodesia group themselves into organizations which are themselves made up of smaller organizations which, in turn, are made up of still smaller organizations. The smallest organization is, of course, made up of individuals. The number of individuals and the number of component organizations are not uniform but vary in nearly every case. Tribal names are the most obvious mark of discrimination between groups of people. The principal groups in the Charter District have the following tribal names: Hera, Rozwi, Njanja, Dzete and Nobvu. In the following discussion the term *Shona* applies primarily to these tribes and the kinship terms given herein are those used by them. It is believed, however, that the main features of the kinship system are universal among Shona tribes, and that the type of organization described here is widespread.

What is the nature of these organizations viewed from within? The primary bond of cohesion is to be found in the circumstances surrounding the birth of an individual, the principal circumstance being his patrilineal ancestry. The internal binding force which holds each organisation together is the relationship which its members bear to each other.

Common patrilineal descent is a bond and is also the basis of the political, administrative, religious, and social systems of the Shona, and the implications which flow from descent are far-

reaching. By descent is meant the fact that a child is born of his own particular parents. A child is descended from both his father and his mother, but the fact that he is his father's son has more far-reaching consequences than the fact that he is descended from his mother. Descent is patrilineal.

By saying that descent is patrilineal is meant that the children born of a marriage are regarded as belonging to the father and his family group. If a marriage is dissolved, the children are taken by the father. The father is always their principal guardian. His consent is necessary to the marriage of a daughter, and he receives the "gifts conditional" (*fuma* or *rowora*) which are handed over by a son-in-law as part of the marriage arrangements. The children take as their totem the totem of their father and are recognised as belonging to the clan of their father and they assume his clan and tribal names. The clan consists of all those who are patrilineally descended from a common ancestor. The ancestor can usually be traced through tribal genealogies. Children are believed to be under the care and protection of their father's ancestral spirits and are expected to join in the ceremonies in honour of, or in supplication through, the ancestral spirits.

In a community in which multiplicity of wives was strongly approved, in which they enhanced the status of a man, and in which child-bearing was a natural and much valued function of women,

the progeny of an influential man, within two or three generations, ran into hundreds, and in six or seven generations into thousands, of descendants. The fact of descent from an ancestor gave, and still gives, his descendants a sense of unity and, as a rule, they live together as a clan in their own clan area under a chief whose hereditary title is the name of the ancestor who begot them.

Between those clansmen who owe allegiance to a chief relationship can usually be traced, because the branches of the family are remembered. The sense of unity between clansmen is shown by the use of *isu* (us) in cases which are the subject of litigation as distinct from *ara* (those others) to denote the opponents. These terms are used both when different clans have quarrels and also when different branches of the clan are involved in litigation. The term *hama yedu* (our relatives) also illustrates that the Shona think in terms of groups and seldom of individuals. This is further borne out when the system of kinship terms is discussed later in this paper.

An individual's position in the clan depends on the generation to which he belongs, the status of his father, grandfather and other ancestors, age, and often whether his father has held a certain title. Descent therefore determines the official position of an individual within the tribe to which he belongs.

Tribal organization has as its keystone relationship to the chief. Within the clan area also live a number of relatives-in-law, vassals (*gota*) who have tendered allegiance to the chief of the clan, and other hangers-on. The clan, together with remote lineages, and these stranger elements (*watorwa*) make up the tribe.

Incestuous unions were and are abhorred and feared by Shona peoples and were very severely punished, because they disrupted the pattern of relationships, and were thought to anger the ancestral spirits, and to disturb the well-being of the tribe. Descent was therefore vitally important, principally on the father's side, but also on the mother's side, so that a union which was within the prohibited degrees of relationship and therefore incestuous should not occur. The prohibited degrees excluded marriage with any person

with whom there was agnatic relationship, however distant, and excluded any member of the mother's clan. These rules postulate the spirit of the law. Under special circumstances, exceptions are found. These are discussed later.<sup>1</sup>

When we say baldly that descent is patrilineal we should think of (1) the effect of patriliney as between father and child, (2) the blood bond which exists between persons who have common patrilineal descent (3) the rules of exogamy which operate between persons both of whom are believed to be descended from some remote ancestor owing to their having the same totemic animal.

Where between two persons the common ancestor can be traced, the consequences of descent are much more cogent than where the connection is distant and not directly traceable.

The Shona system for determining whether persons are related to each other is that of giving the name of the father's totemic animal to each child.

The totemic animal and the tribal group to which it pertains mark the patrilineal descent of each Shona man and woman. Each child, in addition to his private name, is given the name of his father's totemic animal and, when old enough, is told the name of his mother's totemic animal and consequently, to avoid the crime of incest, he knows the lineal groups into which he or she may not marry. The prominent part that the totem plays in Native life justifies its discussion at this stage.

### THE TOTEMIC ANIMAL (*MUTUPO*)

In examining the connotation of the term "totem" Professor Lowie<sup>2</sup> reminds us how necessary it is, in using it, to distinguish between those societies where there is a psychological association between men and the totem animal and those where there is no such association. Although the word is used here with a meaning other than the one Professor Lowie would like to be associated with the word, it is used because of its wider popular appeal. It conveys meaning more readily to

<sup>1</sup> See *chekana ukhama* at p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See *mai nini* among the Manyika (NADA, 1924, p. 66).

<sup>3</sup> *Primitive Society* (London, 1921), p. 136.



the minds of readers than its Shona counterpart *mutupo*.

For the purposes of this paper, totem (*mutupo*) or totemic animal refers to those animals, parts of an animal, or attributes of an animal, which are used by Shona Natives as the emblem of the patrilineal group to which each belongs. That is to say that all persons descended through males from a common ancestor use the name of an animal to denote the agnatic group from which they originate and of which they are all believed to be members. The totemic animal is also an object of certain food taboos.

It is clear from the way Natives speak that the thought paramount in their minds when discussing the significance of *mutupo* is an animal of the veld (*mhuka*). For instance, enquiry was made as to what the *Ngonya* (*tsiwo*) (vagina) totem was. An informant, either not knowing or not wishing to disclose it, replied "I do not know that animal" (*mhuka iyeyo andiyiziwi*).

The *Ngonya* or *tsiwo* group is said to comprise those people who directed a sister's son (*muzukuru*) to do the honours on the bridal night. The reason given is that he, being more diminutive, would be less uncomfortable for the bride. People of this totem regard buttock and vagina meat as taboo. Elsewhere evidence is given of cases of a *muzukuru* sister's son raising seed to his (mother's brother) *sekuru*.

The people of the Pool (*dziwa*) totem regard as taboo fish, hippopotami, and the waters of the Sabi and Shawe Rivers. It is clear also that Natives have in mind the totemic animal when they discuss a person's *mutupo* and not merely the name of the animal. Thus *Mara*, *Gusho*, *Manyame* (*impala* antelope) are interchangeable as names of the totemic animal and are equally interchangeable as the names of the human "kind" (*rudzi*). If one asks a Native to what group (*rudzi*) he belongs, in the majority of cases the reply will be, "I am of the Heart" (*Ndo kwa Moyo*) or "I am an Eland" (*Ndiri Shawa*) or, quoting an actual instance referred to elsewhere, "He is a Sheep" (*I gwai*).

That the totem represents the fundamental agnatic group division among Shona peoples be-

comes apparent very early in the course of investigation. No Native is without one. It descends patrilineally; that is to say that the children automatically take as their totem the totem of their father. Persons who have the same animal for their totem are thought to be related, but this assumption may be rebutted by examining the other group distinction which every Native makes, namely the tribal name. It is certain that persons who have different animals as totems are not agnatically related. There is no agnatic relationship between Heart, Lion, Zebra or other totemic animals. But there are two Heart groups in the Charter District: the Njanja have the Heart for their *mutupo* and so do the Rozwi. If Heart meets Heart it would be assumed that they were related until enquiry showed to which tribal group each belonged. Another way in which the point could be cleared up is by ascertaining what the *chidawu* of each is, for that is often another clue to the tribal group. *Sinyoro* is the *chidawu* of the Njanja and there are no Rozwi who have that *chidawu*. The *chidawu* of the Rozwi under Msarurgwa is *Mondizo*. All the Njanja have *chidawu Sinyoro*, but not all the Rozwi have *chidawu Mondizo*. The Nobvu have several *chidawu* but the Hera only one, namely *Mseyamwa*.

Where there are several *chidawu* names in a tribal group it indicates closeness or distance of relationship to those who know tribal lore and traditions. They probably represent remote branches.

The author's investigation has revealed the following totemic animals in the Charter District: Bird (*Shiri*), Monkey (*Soko*), Lion (*Shumba*), Leg (*Gumbo*), Heart (*Moyo*), Heart (*Moyo 2*), Eland (*Shawa 2*), sheep (*Whayi* or *Gwai*), Pool-fish (*Dziwa*), Buffalo (*Shonga*), Vagina (*Ngonya-tsiwo*), Elephant (*Nzoxu*), Zebra (*Tembo*), Impala antelope (*Mara*, *Gusho*, *Manyame*), Spring hare (*Nenga*).

To ascertain what a person's totem is, one will ask "What do you taboo?" (*Uneyerayi*). The reply will be given "I taboo Eland" or Heart or whatever it may be (*Ndi neyera Shawa*). If one's next question is "What do you mean by *yera*?" (*Kuyera kudiya*) one is told "I do not eat Eland" or Heart (*Andijji Shawa*). And if the question



be followed up as to why, the reply will be given that if a person of the Eland totem eats eland his teeth will drop out.

If one asks whether Eland man may marry Eland woman, one will be told excitedly, "No, it is taboo it terrifies, I am related to her". (*Kwete, ku ne yera, ku ne tchkisa, ndi ne ukhama naye.*) If Ego is Eland, he will refer to another person of the Eland totem as "my relative" (*hama yangu*). He will be glad to meet such a person and will be hospitable to him. If it is a woman, he will not indulge in familiarities with her, for marriage between relatives is incest and is prohibited.

The name of the totem animal serves, therefore, as an exogamous bar because persons having the same totem are presumed to be agnatically related.

A ceremonial form of greeting is to use the totem of the person greeted. The Rozwi frequently greet each other as *Moyo* (Heart) and the Hera as *Shawa* (Eland). The persons so addressed feel honoured and complimented.

It will be observed that the *chidawu* name and the clan ancestor's names, both of which are representative of group divisions, are also used as forms of address and greeting.

No direct evidence on the totem question can be obtained from Natives, nor can they even conjecture how totem names originated. *Zwini izwi nde zive kurekare* " (These things are of long, long ago) conveys their inability to advance an explanation.

Being of the same "agnatic group" (*rudzi* sort) is usually used to mark the consanguinity of those groups who share a common totem name, but between which relationship cannot necessarily be traced. Where common descent can be traced, this fact is made apparent either by the fact that they owe allegiance to a common chief, or, where two groups live under different chiefs, the one chief is known to be either the "elder brother" (*mkoma*) or the younger brother (*mununguna*) of the other, i.e., the founders of the chiefships some generations back were brothers.

The primary function of the totem is as a group label. Broadly speaking, it establishes whether agnatic relationship is present or absent, and in doing so it acts as an exogamous bar and sex taboo.

There is also a taboo on eating the totemic animal. This taboo was at one time much stronger than it is at present. The light-hearted manner with which Natives explain that the Leg (*Gumbo*) group only taboo the shin-bone is one among other indications of the growing disregard of the food taboo, and tends to confirm the view that the latter is ancillary and incidental to the sex taboo or exogamous bar which is much more durable.

In the minds of Natives the totem is an object in regard to which there are avoidances of both marriage and eating. While at first sight to suggest an association between marriage and eating may be startling, it should, in fact, be expected seeing that these two are the basic animal urges in man, and that primitive man, in many respects, approximates closer to the animal than does man in a state of advanced culture.

The number of instances<sup>1</sup> of this association in speech and action which can be observed in the life of the people show beyond doubt that there is a constant psychological association between, if not an equation of the values of, the acts of feeding and coitus; or, at very least, illustrate that neither of the dual functions of wives satisfaction of hunger and sex is paramount to the other in the minds of primitive peoples. Eminent writers have already drawn attention to two departments of thought found among primitive peoples. There is the conscious thought which is born of personal experience and positive reasoning on the one hand, and on the other there is a subtler sort which is more an attempt to explain cause and effect by reflection and subconscious processes. There would appear to be no doubt whatever that a cogent link between the two animal wants exists in the subconscious life of the Shona.

Not so conclusive as the foregoing is the possible and suggested association between the "falling out of teeth" if the totem animal is eaten and the possible loss of fertility.

In a few instances and under stress of social

<sup>1</sup> In NADA (1924) Father Burbridge described how on four occasions he has had ocular demonstration of the beneficent manner in which the Honey Guide has led the way to a hive of honey. He says the Shona call the bird *Mukaranga wa mambo* (Lesser wife of the King). The wifely duty of providing food for her husband is thereby recognised.



discord, totem, *chidawu* name, and personal names have been changed, either temporarily or permanently, for others more consonant with safety. Thus a group living in the Mondoro Reserve claim that, though their totem is now *Tembo* (Zebra), it used to be *Soko* (Monkey). They tell how, long ago, their ancestors incurred the wrath of the tribe, then living near present Bulawayo, by burying a dog in the ground in the same manner as a human being (*va ka viga imbgha so munu*—they buried a dog like a person). They were obliged to flee for safety, to conceal their identity by changing their names and descriptions, and eventually they found sanctuary as neighbours of the Hera. The underlying reasoning is that if the “monkey” people heard there were other “monkey” people passing the villages of others in the course of their flight they would have been able to track them and kill them. They therefore concealed their identity by changing all their “identification labels.”

#### REMOTE BRANCHES

By agnatic group is meant all those persons who believe themselves to be related to each other by patrilineal descent. A branch (ethnographically speaking) is made up of the descendants of a less remote ancestor. The males of each generation may found branches of the agnatic group of which they are members by birth. Branches may therefore be large or small, and the ancestor which founds the branch may be near or remote. Remote branches naturally have lesser branches. Natives refer to each branch (*Manda*) by the name of the ancestor who founded the branch. Obviously all persons who are patrilineally descended from an ancestor who lived ten or fifteen generations ago cannot live in the same village or even in the same area. Branches have broken away from the trunk and have established themselves as separate communities.

Despite the time that has passed since the breaks occurred, a number of these dispersed groups or branches strongly maintain the belief that they are related to each other, and this belief is supported by traditions, by a common *mutupo* and/or *chidawu* name. The observer will accept that

the groups are descended from the same parents. The Hera of Charter claim to be related to the Shankwe of Sebungwe (Gokwe). Both have the Eland as their totem and the old people say that they had a common ancestor very many generations ago. The two groups live in different areas and form two distinct political and territorial organizations. Their common descent signifies very little in the internal affairs of the community and is of active interest only historically and in a few and very select contacts, for example, the interchange of ceremonial visits by representatives of the chiefs, the observance or otherwise of exogamy between them, etc.

The relationship of these dispersed groups is described by Natives as being distant (*kure*) and the groups are here referred to as “remote branches of the agnatic group” or, shortly, “remote branches” which, more precisely defined means those groups which by tradition are believed to be related to each other by agnation, but between which relationship cannot be traced through tribal genealogical tables. Remote branches are not necessarily found in different districts. In the Charter District those Rozwi under Chief Msarurgwa and those Rozwi under Chief Mambo (now Chingombe) believe themselves to be related to each other by agnation. They have the same tribal name and the same totem, but they live in different areas, each is the proprietor of the land in its own area, and each has its own chief. The same position obtains with the Hera living under Mtekedza (Masarirambe) and those living under Nyashanu.

The remoteness of branches is sometimes defined by the use of different *chidawu* names (pl. *zvidawu*) and sometimes by a reference to the name of the chief of the clan. Thus, having ascertained that a Shona is of totem Eland, one will next ask “an Eland of where?” The reply will include a reference to one or more of the three possible groupings “an Eland of the Hera” (his tribal name), or “an Eland of the Nyashanu” (his chief’s name), or “our *chidawu* is *Mseyamwa*. Whether a branch is a remote branch or not can only be determined from enquiry into the facts in each case.



It should not be assumed that, because branches are remote, they will always be found to have different *chidawu* names. From the number of instances so far observed a number insufficient to base a generalisation on it—it would seem that *chidawu* names are more numerous where remote branches live near to each other than where they are territorially distant from each other. This, if found from a wider investigation to be correct, would not be illogical.

Some tribes have publicly established that two branches have become "remote" by a ceremony—the *chekana ukhama* ceremony—which for legal purposes cancels the social consequences of agnation.

#### THE FICTION BY WHICH AGNATIC RELATIONSHIP IS "SEVERED" (*CHEKANA UKHAMA*)

In past generations when relationship has become remote the elders of clans have removed the restraints on intermarriage, imposed by the exogamous rule that persons who are patrilineally related should not marry, by carrying out a ceremony known as "cutting the relationship" (*chekana ukhama*). This severance is permissible only when relationship is indeed very remote and after the ancestral spirits have been consulted through their mediums. It is probable that a *chidawu* denotes the branch of the agnatic group to which an individual belongs after agnation is severed. Neither branch changes its totem. Sufficient evidence is not yet available upon which a generalisation can be based.

Even after agnation has been severed many Shona prefer to seek wives from tribes having a different totem and tribal name from their own. The severance merely implies that sexual relations are not punishable as incest.

By *chidawu* is usually meant the name of some distant ancestor which is used by Natives as a symbol of agnatic descent and which they refer to as their *chidawu*. The ancestor may have been of the mother's clan, but this seems improbable.

All persons of Rozwi clan are agnatically related, all have totem Heart, and all observe the rules of exogamy, but within the Rozwi group are several

*chidawu* names. Among the Rozwi of Charter District are the groups "Heart-Mondizo", the "Heart-Netombo", the "Heart-Mashaya-ngombe" and the "Heart-Rimigwa". The Nobvu have totem Pool (*Dziwa*) and *chidawu* names *Muziyikani*, *Marevergwa*, and *Mambo*.

In the case of the Hera the group connotation is identical, for the tribal name Hera and the *chidawu* name *Mseyamwa* denote the same group of persons. There are no other *chidawu* names among them.

Natives say that a *chidawu* is an ancestor name and their view is that a *paternal* ancestor would have been selected. In the author's view the question as to whether the ancestor is paternal or maternal is open to doubt. The grounds for doubt are supplied by two instances, namely, the customary practice of using the (*chidawu*) name *Gambiza* in addressing the wife of a Njanja man, although *Sinyoro* would be used to the man himself (*Gambiza* is the name of the Njanja Mother-clan's great ancestor), and the practice of addressing the wife of an Mbire<sup>1</sup> man by the name *Vudzijena*<sup>2</sup> although the man himself would be addressed by his ordinary *chidawu* *Mondizo*. This may, however, be explained quite logically by the continuation of a practice, established in past generations, when the wife of an ancestor was honoured by being greeted by her own clan name. Succeeding generations have therefore adopted the practice of addressing all wives of that clan by the clan name of the original wife.

The fact, if it is indeed a fact, that in some instances the clan name of the mother as used to indicate the division of the agnatic groups would in no way be inconsistent with the general kinship system. In support of the use of the mother-clan name, although in no way conclusive, is the fact that the Nobvu (mentioned hereafter) have the *chidawu* name *Mashayangombe*, as also do some Rozwi. It may be found, after *ad hoc* enquiry, that the mother of each of these *chidawu* groups came from the clan *Mashayangombe*. It may also be found that the mother-clan of the Mbire,

<sup>1</sup> Mbire tribe is in Marandellas district. Their totem is *Soko* (Monkey) and *chidawu* *Mondizo*.

<sup>2</sup> *Vadzijena* means "white haired".



whose *chidawu* was *Mondizo*, was a Rozwi with *chidawu Mondizo*. Geographical considerations prevent one from studying the theory to a satisfactory conclusion.

A statement taken from an aged Native named Guwakuwa, a vassal (*gota*) of the Njanja sub-chief Chebese, includes the following passage :—

"as regards Rusere's people who live among Mrambghwa's clan, I only know that they have the same totem as us—the Pool totem—and that they are of the same patrilineal descent. We do not marry into their clan. Their *Chidawu* names are *Muziyikani*, *Marevergwa*, and *Wamambo*. No single person has more than one *chidawu* name. The clan is divided into branches, some nearly related to each other and some remotely related. The remote branches are usually distinguished by a *chidawu* name."

This statement and the fact that among some tribes the *chidawu* name is addressed to a man's wife, either by her husband or by strangers, adds colour to the suggestion that the *chidawu* name is derived from the mother-clan. For instance, a Manyika man with *chidawu* name *Samayita* tells me that if a stranger meets his wife he will greet her by addressing her as *Samayita*, and if she does something for him he will say *Mazwita Samayi a* (Thank you *Samayita*). To a man will be said *Mazwita Shumba* (Lion—his totem), not *Samayita*.

The evidence is inconclusive but, logically, the use of the mother-clan title would serve as a reminder of a man's female ancestry and thus prevent that dreadful crime of incestuous intercourse.

The significance and function of the *chidawu* names are not readily and clearly apparent to the observer. Informants appear to associate the term *chidawu* with praises which were and are shouted to honour chiefs and ancestral spirits. The association of praises with particular people or groups of people may have led to their somewhat unclear and uncertain function in grouping people who are patrilineally related.

Among the Manyika, Manyama, Wesa, and Noe tribes of the Inyanga District the people do not know what was meant by a *chidawu* nor is

there another word in their vocabulary to replace that term. Among the Hungwe tribe in the Makoni district the *chidawu* is the complimentary form of address used only to the wife of a clansman. There the men have no *chidawu* apart from a praise-name which is a synonym for the totem animal.

In tribal life the *chidawu* is seldom heard of outside the sphere of courtesies. The rights of individuals and of groups are based upon descent from their male ancestors about whom there is usually definite information and clear knowledge.

The most that can be said of an organization which is represented by a totem or a *chidawu* or both, if indeed it can be called an organization, is that the belief in common descent produces two sentiments: (1) a sentiment between those who share it, which is expressed in ceremonial visits to each other for the interchange of views, and (2) an aversion to intermarriage. This aversion is, generally speaking, the attitude of the majority, although, as has been shown, intermarriage may not be illegal in tribal law.

Several large groups, branches of the totem and/or *chidawu* groups, are organised to carry on the life of the tribe. Differing from the totem and *chidawu* groups in this respect, these organizations have a common purpose. They have laws and institutions for maintaining laws, they have systems of land tenure, their members act and interact for self defence, co-operative projects obtaining their food needs. These groups merit the term organization.

The effective organization of persons of mixed descent is the tribe. Within the tribe the chief's clan is the central core which owns the ground, provides the chief, and is final arbiter in disputes. The clan is the principal effective division of the agnatic group in the daily life of the people.

#### THE CLAN, SUB-CLAN, AND SMALLER AGNATIC GROUPS RECOGNISED IN LEGAL MATTERS

It is necessary here to introduce terms to represent each type of organization which has an effective part to play in the daily exchanges, social relations, disputes and other occurrences in tribal



life. For practical purposes it is necessary to identify only six types of branch in Shona agnatic groups, namely :—

1. The clan (*rudzi*)—the descendants of the man who founded the chief's hereditary name.

2. The sub-clan (*jinda* group). There are as many sub-clans as there are branches of the chief's family to succeed to the chief's name. Old chiefships are often found to have reduced the number of sub-clans to two.

3. Remote lineage groups of the chief's clan. This term includes those branches that have the same totem and tribal name as the chief, but have no claim to the chiefship, either because they are related to the clan through an ancestor more remote than he who founded the chiefship, or because the branch's claim to succeed has become eliminated by tribal decision. The senior representative of a remote section is also known as a *jinda*, but his legal rights differ from the head of a sub-clan in that he can never succeed to the chiefship.

4. The lineage group, which usually occupies a village (*musha*). The term *musha* is applicable either to the buildings of a village or to the people of the village.

5. The family group (*muri*).

6. The hut group (*imba*).

#### 1. The clan

The term "clan" is applied only to those who are related to each other by patrilineal descent from the founder of the chief's hereditary title and who form a political and territorial unit. Pride of membership of the clan is shown in the use of the clan chief's title as a form of respectful and complimentary address. It is polite when meeting a man to greet him by speaking the name of his chief or of some other remote ancestor. Thus, when Tumbghwi met Mdanga he said in a loud voice *Maromo, mbuya*, these being the names respectively of Mdanga's chief and *chidawu*; *Maromo* is the Dzete clan's chief in the Charter District.

Clansmen join in religious ceremonies and ritual observances which establish relations between themselves and their male ancestors through males, and they succeed to titles, founded by their

ancestors. All descendants of an ancestor through males belong to his group and they comprise a unit in legal issues; that is to say, a neighbouring clan would hold the whole clan responsible for the theft of cattle by one of a chief's villages. In land disputes, too, the clan will stand together to uphold the claim of any one of its villages.

#### 2. The sub-clan

Although there is a sense of strong cohesion within the clan when there are differences to be settled with other clans, differences and disputes occur between the different family branches of the clan. A clan is divisible into as many sub-clans as there are family branches within the clan. This will usually depend upon the number of sons and "huts"<sup>1</sup> the founder of the clan had, for each "hut" usually found a major branch of the family and his name is inherited by the senior member of this major branch or sub-clan. The senior living member of each sub-clan should have a turn at becoming chief of the clan after the ruling chief dies. The senior member of a sub-clan will be known as a sub-chief (*jinda*, pl. *machinda*). The unity of the sub-clan is most in evidence in matters of succession to the chiefship. Its members will support the claim of their sub-chief to the chiefship. In many clans the number of houses or sub-clans entitled to succeed has been reduced to two.

#### 3. The lineage group.

Within each sub-clan are a number of lineage groups, i.e. persons patrilineally descended from a near ancestor—usually a great grandfather. A lineage group usually has its own village and garden lands, and the senior member of the lineage group is the head of the village.

The village is the principal social and administrative unit in tribal life; economically it constitutes a unit for land tenure, labour and defence; geographically it constitutes a rough territorial area; and legally a lineage group is held responsible in law for the acts of its members. For instance, if the tracks of stolen cattle are traced to a village its inmates are deemed to be responsible

<sup>1</sup> N.B. The children of co-wives of the same clan constitute one "hut", for they are full blood brothers and sisters.



for the payment of compensation to the owners of the cattle unless the tracks can be traced beyond the village area.

The males who occupy a village usually include men who are closely and patrilineally related to each other. Shona villages vary in size from ten to eighty adult males, the average being twenty. A man founds a village and begets sons and daughters. The sons marry and bring their wives to live at the paternal village and themselves beget children there. The "lineage group", that group which includes males who are patrilineally descended from a fairly near ancestor, constitutes the nucleus of the village. Their wives, children and dependants, and sometimes a son-in-law or two, complete the village establishment. The lineage group is also a partnership which usually acts through its senior member. The senior member usually acts as the representative of the village in its relations with the chief and other villages, and acts as its administrative head.

The lineage group is the largest closely integrated agnatic group in everyday life. Its members have common ancestry, reciprocal duties and behaviour patterns, obligations to support and protect each other, to defend the common weal, and a strong sense of solidarity binds them together. An injury or insult to one is an injury or insult to all. They share rights and privileges, and have joint responsibilities to other similar entities and to the body politic.

The lineage group, broadly speaking, consists of the agnatic descendants of a grandfather. Relationship can often be traced further back than the grandfather but for normal practical purposes there is no value in doing so.

The sense of unity within the lineage group is illustrated by the case of *Muzadzi vs. Marungani* (March 1937). In this case a man named Wadawareva had been away from home some fourteen months when his wife Marungani became pregnant. She had been living in the village of her husband's sister Fumisa, where also resided her own sister and the latter's husband. She became pregnant while her husband was away and she suggested going on a visit to her husband, but Fumisa forbade her, saying that she could not go

in a pregnant condition. "I was afraid" Fumisa related "that if I let her go to her husband, and if she had a miscarriage or the child died, the man who made her pregnant (the owner of the womb) would say that we had killed the child." So Marungani remained at home, obeying her husband's sister (*vamgweni*). The womb grew but after seven months it was found that it suddenly disappeared. Wadawareva being still away at work, Muzadzi, his elder brother (*mkoma*) his father's half-brother's son), alleged that she had caused abortion. She had made no mention to him of a miscarriage and he was accordingly incensed. "I, your husband,<sup>1</sup> why did you conceal from me?" (*Ini murume wako wa ka ndi vanzireyi.*) "Why did you keep silent from me; thereupon our spirit was angered?" (*Waka ndi nuyararireyi; ndopa kwa shatirgwa moyo wedu.*) It appeared that Fumisa had entered Marungani's hut to persuade her to go to the chief to be questioned as to who her lover was, and blood was seen on the mat. She was alleged to have replied that it was the blood of a fowl she had killed, and when told that a fowl's blood was different, she said she had menstruated (*Nda ka sanduka*). The husband's relatives were convinced that she had caused abortion. In Marungani's favour, and as a matter of interest, medical evidence subsequently proved that the suspicion had been falsely founded. She had never been pregnant. The unity of the lineage is shown in that Muzadzi (Wadawareva's father's half-brother's son) spoke in the first person plural.

The sense of unity of the lineage group is also shown by the speech of Mandiwanzira, a woman, who represented her absentee brother at the marriage of his daughter Zawanyadza, and who spoke in the first person thus: "I received bride-price amounting to ten cattle etc." Actually her brother received it.

Within the lineage group the males refer to the wife of one of them as *mkadzi wedu* (our wife). A grandson will declare that he delivered bride-price for a wife at a time when he must have been

<sup>1</sup> A paternal uncle's son is in the social position of "husband" to the wife of another member of the lineage group.



about four years old, and a grandfather will say that he has recently delivered bride-price for a girl of about sixteen years of age. This is not because the woman has more than one husband or the grandson is lying or the grandfather is overburdening Providence. The lineage group regards itself as a continuing unity whose property rights, and liabilities are shared *inter vivos* and between past and present generations. The son becomes the "father" to such an extent that he can take his name and speak his father's words. The lineage group cattle are used to obtain wives for the male members and those received for female members accrue to the group.

#### 4. The family group

The "family (agnatic) group" includes a man and his male children. Many men have several wives and the male children of all the wives form a legal unit. This group together with the wives and daughters make up the family (*muri*).

The father is head of the family and the property and persons of its members are under the control of the father or guardian who is expected to use them for the benefit of the family.

Each wife is legally a member of her father's lineage group, and that group is always represented in litigation in which the woman is involved. Several wives whose sentiments and kinship ties secure them to their several lineage groups cannot therefore be described as a single legal unit. Within the family the males constitute the legal unit—a partnership which shares many rights and is jointly liable to many obligations. This partnership the family group is a legal unit which usually acts through its senior member but which may be represented by any member. The property or person of any member of the partnership may be used to discharge a family obligation. Thus (see table at the end), if Ndakayisweyi's daughter were to die without bearing children to her husband, the *rowora* received from, say, the daughter of Mtambi could be used to discharge the obligation of the family to return the *rowora* to the bereft son-in-law. If it should become possible at a later date for Ndakayisweyi's hut group to restore those cattle to Mtambi's hut group, it will have to do so.

#### 5. The hut group

The "hut" consists of a man, one wife, and her children: Within the "hut", the "hut (male) group" consists of the man and his sons by that wife.

Natives feel that the closest possible ties exist between full brothers. They have entire community of blood, birth, and interest and share nearly every possible legal right or obligation. Its members are a partnership. It is usual for a hut group to speak through and be represented by the father or the eldest son, but any member may act on its behalf in the absence of the senior member. A man who has several wives is a member of several hut groups, for he is shared by the hut groups born to each of his wives.

Between the hut groups in a family there is a careful balancing of debits and credits, a balancing of services rendered to each other, loans made, food supplied, and things given. Whenever the property or persons of one hut group have been used for the benefit of another hut group in the family, it must either be returned or else the equivalent in kind and value must be repaid if and when this becomes possible. Thus (see table at the end), if the *rowora* from Ndakayisweyi's daughter be used to obtain a wife for Mandisasasa's son, then, when family circumstance permit it, the equivalent of that *rowora* must be restored to Ndakayisweyi's hut.

It is perhaps necessary to emphasise that these agnatic groups are separable from the social groups to which they belong primarily for legal purposes. The males are jointly responsible to the chief for good conduct, they are jointly responsible for the good conduct of the daughters and sisters given in marriage, they are jointly responsible for returning *rowora* if a kinswoman should desert her husband or fail to bear children. In claims to the estates of dead kinsmen, only the males have a *locus standi*. In disputes between one sub-clan and another, say, over the rights of each to succeed to the chiefship, the members of the sub-clan will support the claims advanced by their sub-chief; or, where disputes over cattle which were exchanged several generations before are the subject of litigation, the members of each



interested lineage group will inform himself of the facts and stand in with the representatives of his group.

Not only does the sense of solidarity manifest itself in the expression of the feelings of the people but it is also recognised in their laws and customs. For instance, a full brother has a preferent claim to the "gifts conditional" (*rowora*) received from the marriage of his sister as against the claim of the sister's half brother. Similarly, he has a preferent claim to the estate of a dead brother. Numerous other instances will be found of the manner in which cohesion within the several groups mentioned manifests itself or is accorded recognition in Native law.

Where a man has married two sisters or two women of the same clan, the children of those women are regarded as brothers and sisters of the full blood, and they constitute a single "hut" for legal purposes. In inheritances from fathers they are one unit, and they have priority to the property of each other over half-brothers and sisters.

## KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

Patrilineal groups regard themselves and are regarded by others as self-contained units for legal purposes. This sense of unity is expressed in numerous ways in daily sentiments, social relations and speech, and in the legal system. A further clear expression of it is to be found in the system of kinship terminology and in the classification used in that system. The classifications are based on patrilineal descent. A Shona person's relatives, like those of a person of any other society, is divided into three groups, those of a man's own agnatic group, those of his mother's agnatic group, and those of his wife's agnatic group. A woman's husband's group comes into the last category.

As it is necessary to know exactly what is meant by some of the terms used, a few of these terms will first be defined. For convenience the Latin term "Ego" is used to indicate the speaker first person singular.

The principal kinship terms used include :—

<i>baba</i>	Father, i.e., a social father as well as actual father.
<i>hanzwadzi</i>	A reciprocal term used by a woman of her "brother" and by a man of his sister, therefore the brother-sister relationship.
<i>mai</i>	Mother, i.e. a social mother as well as actual mother.
<i>mai nini</i>	"Little mother": (a) a mother's younger sister, (b) a father's wife junior to one's mother—a step-mother.
<i>mbuya</i>	(a) Mother-in-law or mothers-in-law, the wife of a <i>mukarabghwa</i> ; (b) grandmother.
<i>mkoma</i>	Elder of same sex as self (in consequence elder brother of man, elder sister of woman).
<i>mukarabghwa</i> or <i>tezware</i>	The father-in-law lineage.
<i>mukwasha</i>	A son-in-law lineage.
<i>mununguna</i>	Younger of same sex as self (younger brother of man, younger sister of woman).
<i>muzukuru</i>	(a) The child of a man's sister or the child of a woman's brother, i.e. the child of a <i>hanzwadzi</i> ; (b) a grandchild.
<i>mwana</i>	A child, son or daughter in its social sense as well as "begotten" sense.
<i>sekuru</i>	(a) one's mother's father or brother, a male member of the mother-clan; (b) a grandfather.
<i>vamguene</i>	"Owners". The mother or sister of a husband.
<i>vatetu</i>	A father's sister.
<i>wa-hosi</i>	The senior wife of a man.

The term "brother-sister" is an abbreviation to indicate that the two persons concerned refer to each other by terms which mean "brother" between brothers and "sisters" between sisters. It implies that persons of the same sex bearing such relationship refer to another older than Ego as *mkoma* (older of the same sex) and to another younger than Ego as *mununguna* (younger of same sex), while male speaking of female of that relationship and *vice versa* refer to each other as *ha-*



*nzwadzi*. The term *mununguna* appears to have the primary significance for a man of "younger brother by the same mother", although this is often made clearer by using an explanatory clause thus, "Has he a younger brother in the hut of his mother?" (*U ne mununguna pa imba ya mai wake here?*) The author enquired in one case whether one, Nuta, had a younger brother. The reply was "No". When asked whether he was his father's youngest son, the reply was "Oh no, there are those whom Nuta calls 'younger brother' (*varipo a no vayita mununguna*, i.e., by his father's other wives.)

The term *sekuru* is sometimes used by Natives in place of *tateguru* (paternal grandfather), but, to facilitate an understanding of the Shona kinship system and since it is more convenient and more common among Natives, it is reserved exclusively for the males of the mother's clan.

The term "sibling" denotes those who use the "brother-sister" terminology to each other whether through mothers or through fathers.

#### THE MAN'S OWN AGNATIC GROUP

At the end of this paper there is a complete table of the terms a man uses in reference to persons related to him through his father. It will be seen that all the great-great-grand children (agnatic) of a man are brother-sister to each other.

Clansmen of a higher generation have terms used towards them which recognize their superior position, and they in turn reciprocate with recognized terms to all in a lower generation. In the above case, all the great-grand-children will call the male grandchildren "father" (*baba*) and the latter will reciprocate with the term "children" (*vana*).

The "father" and "child" sequence goes down from generation to generation, and the son of any "father" (*baba*) is "brother" (*mkoma* or *mununguna*) to Ego. A father and his lineage collaterals to a man of the same generation, therefore, are all *baba* to Ego; his lineage ascendants are all *tateguru*.

Where relationship is traceable the parallel descendants of these will refer to each other as *mkoma* (elder brother) and *mununguna* (younger

brother), depending on age. If Ego's father referred to a man as *baba* then Ego will call him *tateguru* or if Ego's father referred to a man as *mkoma* or *mununguna* then Ego will call him *baba* regardless of whether he is Ego's grandfather's child or great grandfather's grandchild or great great grandfather's great-great-grandchild through a different family branch from Ego. Ego will call his children *mkoma* or *mununguna* or *hanzwadzi* depending on age or sex. Every male of the clan is therefore either *baba*, *mkoma* or *mununguna mwana* or *muzukuru* (*mwana wo mwana*) "child of a child" to the others. If Ego is born when his father is twenty-five years old and when his grandfather is fifty, and if another child is born to his grandfather after Ego's birth, Ego will refer to this child as *baba*. It is not therefore rare to find a *baba* and *mwana* of more or less the same age. When the eldest son steps into the place of his dead father he will be referred to as *baba* of the family.

The wife of any *baba* is *mai* to Ego. The sister of any *baba* is *vatele*. The *mkoma* (elder brother) of Ego's father is *baba mukuru* (big father), and the *mununguna* (younger brother) is *tata mdiki* (little father). The husband of any *vatele* (father's sister), *hanzwadzi* (sister), or *mwana* (female child) is *mukwasha* (son-in-law) to Ego.

The lineage (and even the clan) is an unending unity of the past, present and future generations. It assumes the same extra lineage group relationship terms as the past generation. A son is *murabgwa* or *tezwa* (father-in-law) to all his father's sons-in-law and *mukwasha* (son-in-law) to all his father's fathers-in-law. He is sister's son, *muzukuru*, to all his *vasekuru* (father's mother clan), and he is *sekuru* (mother-clan) to all his father's sister's children (*vazukuru*).

Mondiwa said of his father's sister: "Her husband said 'You are sick a great deal, go and be looked after by your fathers'" (i.e., clansmen, meaning Mondiwa, her brother's son, her nearest agnatic relative)—*Murume wake wa ka ti u no ngwara zwizwinzhihi, yenda undo ishengetwa na vadzibaba vako*.

Where a son said offensive things to a step-mother, she returned to her home. Her absentee



husband was accredited with having said these offensive things through his son *Iye ari mwana* (he being a child, i.e., acting through his child) again illustrating the unity of the lineage group.

The sense of unity which obtains between members of the same clan and lineage groups is correlated with attitudes and actions which are of a mutually helpful nature. Members of the lineage group or clan are always consulted and the action which follows is usually that decided upon after consultation. Dutifulness, obedience, and respect are shown to senior males and females of the clan or they all rank as *vadzibata*. This attitude is stronger as between man and father than between man and more remote patrilineal ascendants (*vadzibaba*).

Ego must fear (*kutchka*) his father and ask him for any of his things if he wants them. *Baba ndi no mutchka zwivozwake ndi no kumbira kwazwo*—"My father I fear, things belonging to him I ask for without fail". Chigumira says in the dialect "I will ask my *sekuru* for a thing and if he forbids me to take it I will keep quiet. When he has gone away I will take the thing in his absence. If his wife rebukes me I will say "My *sekuru* forbade me to take it, so I will take it myself" (*ndotora ndega*). When my *sekuru* comes back, his wife will report (*wudza*) to him that I have taken his nice stick (*twimbo rakanaka*). He will say *Mukomana uyo ri benzi*—that boy is mad and will leave it at that."

Father and child may not eat together nor may man and wife, but man and *muzukuru* may eat from the same plate on terms of great intimacy.

To quote again from Chigumira who is sixty years of age. "Even today I fear my father. I do not boldly enter a hut in which he is (*Na zwino baba ndi no mutchka, Andi pindi mumba arimo*). If I want to enter a hut I approach the door and huddle humbly until directed to enter. Then as I enter I will pat hands ceremoniously (*uchira*) and murmur our *chidzvu Mondizo*."

The attitude of fear necessitates obedience to the directions or requests of the persons feared and an attitude of respect. This does not, however, preclude the subordinate from verbally

standing up for his legal and proper dues in any matter which is in dispute.

Presents are given both to those that are feared and those with whom relations are more familiar. In the former case they are given with a sense of propriety and duty, in the latter it is an act of pleasure giving.

An informant said, "If I went to Wedza to forge hoes, when I came back I would give my mother one hoe and my father perhaps five hoes. If I wanted to, I would give my younger brother one hoe. To my father's sister (*vate*) and my father's mother (*mbuya*) I show the same fear as I show him. I fear my elder brothers, but my younger brothers should fear me. When I meet a person whom I fear, I will greet him first and will say *Ma ka diyi, wakuru* (How do you do, elder), and will pat hands in generous measure. He will respond and say *Ta gava zwedu, imwe ma ka diyi*—we live ours, you, how do you do—and will pat hands once or twice." My sister is merely my sister—*a ri hanzwadzi chete*. If she is younger than I, she should fear me for I am a man, and when my father dies I will take his name and will become *baba* to her."

Sister-brother relations are very friendly, and often the sister looks after her brother's wives.

## THE MOTHER CLAN

On the trunk, as it were, of Ego's patrilineal group is grafted the accretions of mothers, wives, relatives-in-law, etc. These are adopted as social members of the community, but legally they retain part membership of their own agnatic groups.

But his legal position in his father's group is not the sole concern of the Shona. He is also regardful of his mother's side of the family and he has special appellations for them, and a special type of behaviour towards them. The kinship terms used towards the mother-clan are shown in the genealogical table at the end.

All the males of Ego's mother's clan are *sekuru* to Ego. This includes her father and his brothers, her brothers, or their sons, grandsons and great grandsons *ad infinitum*. The relationship between the two agnatic groups is permanent and limitless.

All the mother's sisters are *mai* (mother), and all their children show the brother-sister relationship towards each other.

The wife of a *sekuru* is *dambuya* or *muroora*, the daughter of a *sekuru* is *mai nini* (little mother), and the latter's husband is *baba* (father). The latter's children are brother-sister to Ego. A maternal aunt older than Ego's mother is *mai mukuru* (big mother), and a younger sister is *mai nini* (little mother). Any *sekuru's* daughter is *mai nini* to Ego.

It will be observed that any person who is "father-in-law" to Ego becomes *sekuru* to Ego's children.

A sister's son, i.e., the terminological reciprocal of *sekuru*, is *muzukuru*. A woman's brother's son is also called by that term. The *muzukuru-sekuru* relationship is an intimate but at the same time a legally disinterested relationship, and is dealt with more fully later.

A man or woman shows affectionate familiarity towards his mother and shows the same type of conduct to his mother's lineage males (*sekuru*). He laughs and jokes (*soma*) with them and is generally familiar in his attitude. A *muzukuru* may enter his *sekuru's* hut and take his coat or spear without permission. When the *sekuru* returns he will say "Where has my coat gone?" (*Batchi rangu ra yenda ku pi ko.*) His wives will tell him: "It was taken by a *muzukuryu*" (*ra torowa na muzukuru*). He will grouse, saying "Why did he take it of me?" (*Wa ka ndi tori-revi*), and leave it at that. It is not theft for a *muzukuru* to take his *sekuru's* things (*numbi*). He is also on familiar terms with the wives of the *sekuru*. *U no soma zwikuru, u no ti waroora*—he jokes with them unrestrainedly, for he says they are (only) his *waroora*.<sup>1</sup> It is not incest for not incest for him to have intercourse with them, but normally intercourse is not approved. He may marry the sisters of his *muroora* (*sekuru's* wife—not a *mwana's* wife). Reference is made to the joking disrobing by the *waroora* of the *samkadzi* (executor in an estate) who was a *muzukuru* at

the grasping "the name" rite (*bata zita*) during the "beating the grave" and inheritance ceremonies (*gadzira naka*).

It will be noted that Ego calls the daughter of his *sekuru* by the term *mai nini* (little mother). Ego himself is prohibited from marrying her, but a marriage highly preferred among the Manyika is for Ego's son to marry her—they both being of suitable age. They say that there is no blood relationship and it appeals to them as cementing the two clans together. The Hungwe tribe, tribe neighbours of the Manyika, disapprove of this practice and regard it as incest.

#### TERMS USED TO COLLATERALS

The terms applied to collaterals and their descendants are also clear in genealogical table No. 1.

A short explanatory note follows to illustrate how the blending of clans occurs and how this is manifested by the use of special kinship terms between descendants.

#### Children of Siblings

The brother-sister relationship obtains (a) between brothers and sisters of the whole or half blood, (b) between the children of brothers, (c) between the children of sisters. The fact that relationship is through two sisters, and not through two brothers, is indicated by the term "*kubgha na mai*". Thus *Uyu ndi mkoma wangu kubgha na mai*—"This is my elder-of-the-same-sex related through mothers". (d) between Ego and the child of any person whom Ego calls *mai*, *mai mukuru*, *mai nine*, *baba*, *baba mukuru*, *baba mdiki*, with the apparent exception shown in the next paragraph.

The close association between brother and sister will from time to time be shown in Native life, e.g., it is the sister's child (*muzukuru*) who acts as executor (*samukadzi*) in the division of an inheritance; a man will swear on oath (*pika*) by his sister, the mate of the one is the means of obtaining a mate for the other, and so on.

The child of a *mkoma* or *munununga* is *mwana* to Ego, as also is the child of any *muramu*; the child of a *hanzwadzi* is a *muzukuru*.

Two genealogical tables are given which show how a Shona person refers to those collaterals

<sup>1</sup> This information was given me by a Murozwi in Charter District. The Manyika in Inyanga call a *sekuru's* wife *vambuya*.



related (a) through his father, and (b) through his mother. The terminology is the same whether the person who is Ego be a man or a woman, except that the reciprocal terms for brother-sister would have to be used if Ego were a woman. Also, a woman's brother's wife is *mu(roora)*.

Even as every child born of a clansman of the same generation is brother-sister to Ego, so every child born of a woman of the same totem as one's mother is also brother-sister if of the same generation.

### AFFINAL KINSHIP TERMS

While at first sight it may seem that the effects of marriage on kinship terminology should more properly be dealt with in a discussion of the effect of marriage, on closer study it will be realised that the kinship pattern has reference not only to individuals and families, but to clans and totem groups, and that some of the effects of marriage are binding for past generations and for future generations. For instance, all the "fathers-in-law" (*wakarabghwa*) of Ego's father become Ego's "mother-clan" (*wasekuru*). Again, there have not only to be considered the effects of marriage of, say, B and C (female) on the terminology used to C by B's brother A, but also the kinship terminology used by A after the marriage of his father's brothers or his maternal uncles, or the children of either. One of the effects of marriage is to set in operation the system of kinship terms between the groups involved.

Through marriage each member of the lineage of each spouse acquires a number of additional relations to whom kinship terms are applied. "We have related ourselves" (*Ta khamana*) is one of the concluding responses used by the male relatives on both sides when marriage arrangements have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. What does the relationship mean?

From the time that that response is made the family of the son-in-law and his lineage become the *wakwasha* of the father-in-law's lineage, and the latter become the *wakarabghwa* (fathers-in-law) of the former. In addition, certain kinship terms are used by the son-in-law to his father-in-law's wives, daughters, and other relations, and

the woman uses certain kinship terms to her husband's father, mother and other relations.

### THE FATHER-IN-LAW GROUP (MUKARABGHWA OR TEZWARA): MAN SPEAKING

A man refers to each of his wives as *mkadzi wangu* (wife mine), but the first he marries has a senior position to the others and may be referred to as *wahosi*, the second may be referred to as *murongo* or *wahosana*, and the third or subsequent as *wakaranga*.

A wife's mother and her sisters are *mbuya*; her father and any male member of his lineage is *mkarabghwa* or *tezware*. A wife's *sekuru* is also *sekuru* to Ego, but *womkadzi* (of the wife) may be added for particularization. The same applies to a wife's *sekuru's* wife, the *dambuya* or *muroora*. The daughter of a wife's *sekuru* is *mai nini womkadzi* to Ego, but her husband is *mukarabghwa* (father-in-law), and her daughter is *muramu*, as also are the wife's sisters who, too, are daughters of a *mukarabghwa* and are marriageable.

### THE SON-IN-LAW GROUP: MAN SPEAKING

All the son-in-law's lineage, men and women, are *wakwasha*.

### THE HUSBAND'S GROUP: WOMAN SPEAKING

A woman's husband is *murume wangu* (man mine). Her husband's eldest brother is *murumekuru* and his wife is *mai guru*. Her husband's younger brother is *muramu* and his wife is *mununguna*. She identifies herself with her husband in her attitude towards his parents and addresses them *baba* and *mai*, but she may refer to them as *tezware* and *mezware*. Her husband's sisters are *vamgwene*, and this term may be applied to his *vatele* or his *mai*. The *vamgwene's* husbands are *wakwasha vo murume* and their children are *vadzimgwene*, or among the Manyika they are known as *samkadzi* (girl) or *waramu* (boy).

If *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, are all the wives of *Z*, *a*, will call the mother's brother of *b*, *c*, *d*, *sekuru*: *d* will do the same to the *wasekuru* of the others, and so on.

The co-wives of a polygamist will usually refer to each other as *gadziyina*, but may refer to each other as *mkoma* (older sister) or *mununguna*

(younger sister) as seniority dictates. The chief wife is *wahosi* to all the lesser wives, but the latter are *gadzinyina* to her and to each other. Men who have married the daughters of one man are *vakwashayina* (co-sons-in-law).

Cattle which are obtained from the exchange of grain grown by a woman pertain peculiarly to her family, as also do cattle received as "gifts conditional" from a daughter of that family. If these cattle are used to obtain a wife for the son of another family, it will be said *Wa ka roworo ne ngombe dze gadzinyina*. (He delivered as "gifts conditional" the cattle of another family.) Thus, in the case of *Shuka* vs. *Nemachena* it has shown that one Bawire had delivered eight head of cattle as "gifts conditional", but had subsequently taken back six head because they were the cattle pertaining to another house (*ngombe dze gadzinyina*) and the mother's spirit was troubling her husband's house for having used her cattle to obtain a wife for the son of another house.

In the case of *Guwakuwa* vs. *Mavengere*, Guwakuwa had accepted "gifts conditional" from one Rice, and Guwakuwa's daughter had then refused to marry Rice. Guwakuwa's son had been refused by Mavengere's daughter after Mavengere had accepted "gifts conditional". Mavengere delivered the "gifts conditional" returnable to Guwakuwa's son, who came with Rice to take delivery of them. In Mavengere's eyes there was a "set off" and Rice was the "owner" of the cattle. He said *Ngombe dze ka tinwa na mridzi wadzo*—"the cattle were driven away by their owner (i.e., the man entitled to them).

#### BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS RELATIVES THROUGH MARRIAGE

To a man's father-in-law (*mukarabghwa*) the same attitude is shown as to a *baba*. A man's mother-in-law (*mbuya*) is the most terrifying of all persons. In regard to his mother-in-law Chigumira says "If she comes into the hut when I am eating I will cease to eat. If I pass her on the path I will kneel or stoop (*fugama*) and pat hands (*uchira-yita guswi*) as a sign of greeting and respect.

I fear her for she is my wife's mother, she is awe-inspiring (*a no tchkisa*)".

A woman should not speak the name of either parent-in-law but should always refer to them as *baba* and *mai* or *tezware* and *mezware*. Her attitude to them must be submissive and filial. Nor should a man speak the name of his mother-in-law. He should always keep his eyes lowered in her presence and kneel down and pat hands in the *yita guswi* manner.

Chigumira says: "I dare not look into the eyes of my *mbuya* (mother-in-law). When I visit my father-in-law I will, on arrival, go straight to greet my mother-in-law. I will approach, pat hands ceremoniously, murmur her husband's *chidawu* name, and ask after her health. All this time I look to the ground, I dare not look (*nanganidza*) into her face."

The shame one feels when dogs, fowls, goats, or cattle copulate or attempt to do so anywhere where one may be present with mothers-in-law (*vadzimbuya*) is stressed. *Kuno nyadza kwazwo munu a chi tarisa badzi*—"it shames one surely; a person just looks to the ground (action of shrinking).

A wife should fear her husband and therefore be obedient to him (*terera*) and she should treat his sister in the same manner. She calls them *vamgweni* (owners). If a man and his male relatives are away his wife should obey his sister for she is of the same relation as her husband.

Mkadzi, relating how she first met a relative of her husband, described how the husband's sister brought the stranger to her husband's village, and how the husband introduced her as another sister. She continued, "The woman gave me her bead-girdle, I ululated saying my husband's sister (*vamgweni*) has arrived. I accepted her girdle." (*Mkadzi wa ndi pa matambo. Nda ti vamgweni va wuya nda gamshira matambo.*)

Again quoting Whigumira: "My *waramu* I treat as I please. I throw them to the ground and play with them howsoever I please."

By marriage a son-in-law becomes a "child" (*mwana*) of his wife's father in the eyes of the community. The English interpretation of the term suggests that this conception at one time



obtained in English social conditions. He not only calls the latter *baba* with reciprocal *mwana* but he is expected to behave obediently and filially towards him. His obligations often appear to be more binding than those of a son to his father. He becomes *mukwasha* to the whole father-in-law lineage, and must be dutiful to them all. He is expected to deliver whatever "gifts conditional" are asked of him.

Madza had been a victim in a mine accident and was entirely incapacitated. His *mukwasha* (sister's husband) Gwemende went to Bulawayo some 200 miles away, to bring him home. Madza did not get on well with a younger brother Zwani and the latter would not go. To the question why he had not gone, the counter question was "*Va nozwana here?*"—do they feel (for) each other? "*Ha vanzwani*"—they do not feel for each other.

Marriage, and often the entering into preliminary arrangements with a view to marriage, has an immediate effect upon its social relations of the man and woman, and their respective families. Between the families a relationship is established whereby the men's lineage group becomes a son-in-law (*mukwasha*) group, and the woman's father's lineage group becomes a father-in-law (*mukarabghwa*) group. The man's fathers and brothers will become "sons-in-law" and the girl's paternal uncles and brothers will all become their "fathers-in-law".

These kinship terms act as a barrier to certain further unions between the families. But, although the kinship terms extend to the family groups, the obligations and filial status of a son-in-law to his father-in-law are much stronger between the husband of the girl and her father than between the more distantly connected members. The girl's husband will have to assume a filial, even a servile, attitude to the girl's mother and father in an endeavour to retain their affection and favour.

As between the parties to the marriage, the girl will pass from the parental control of her father to the marital control of her husband. She is given (*puwa*) in marriage, and thereafter she is obliged to submit to her husband's wishes in all

respects. It is expected that she will conduct herself pleasantly, will obey her husband in all matters, and will bear him children. The code of behaviour normal to a wife includes prohibition against any conduct that might give rise to the suspicion that she has been unfaithful, and to avoid such suspicion she should not be out unaccompanied late at night, or in the woods, nor should she leave her husband's village to go visiting without his consent or the consent of his representative, either a clansman or his mother, or his sister.

The man, on the other hand, is obliged to divide his nights between his wives. To neglect one is to give grounds for complaint. And to fail to make a wife pregnant is ground for even stronger complaint. The man has to provide a separate hut for each wife, the huts being built by co-operation between the man and the woman and their respective families. A senior wife is sometimes referred to as *mkoma* (elder sister) by her juniors, and a junior as *mununguna* (younger sister) by her seniors. Seniority is usually determined by the date of marriage.

A Shona will frequently refer to a wife as *vadzimai vangu* (my mothers) (complimentary plural) or *mdzimai vangu* (my mothers). This is in contrast with terms applied to his mother, e.g., *amai vangu* or *mai vangu*. It is clear that the concept underlying *mai* has reference to the reproducing ability of women, and means something like the "child-bearer". A psychological connection also suggests itself between *mdzimu* and *vadzimu* (ancestral spirits), *mdzimai* and *vadzimai* (child-bearer), but no direct connection has been traced.

Marriage gives a man the right to the children born of his wife, and that whether he be the physiological father of the child or not. The question as to whether a man should allow the physiological father of an adulterine child to assume custody of it, after delivery of cattle or compensation is one on which there is a variety of opinions amongst Natives.

The plain issue of traditional legal rights is obscured and complicated by ideas that the ancestral spirits of the mother act as custodians of a child's well-being, and for the child's good he

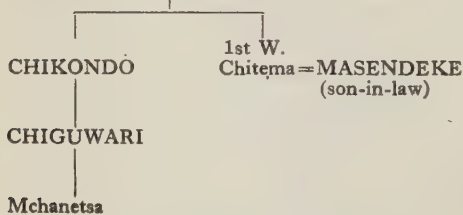
should live where the spirits can be communicated with.

In regard to property, the pots made by a woman, the hearth stones, and grind-stones collected by her, things of a personal nature given to her, and crops grown by her are her own property, but they, like herself, are under the control of her husband while she is in his village.

### THE SON-IN-LAW—FATHER-IN-LAW RELATIONSHIP

Where one clan is the recognised wife-giver (*wakarabghwa*) to another as sometimes happens, there arises the problem as to how this relation-

Father-in-law clan of totem  
Heart *chidawu* name *Sinyoro*

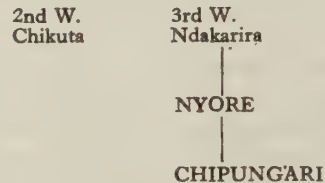


ship can continue to be maintained between the descendants of the woman who are taken to wife by the son-in-law clan and the descendants of the father-in-law clan, because the latter forthwith becomes the mother-clan of the former.

The answer is that only the descendants of the son-in-law *through other wives* continue to bear the son-in-law relationship to the wife-providing clan. Those who are descended from the latter assume the closer relationship of mother-clan and children-of-sister (*sekuru-musukuru*) to each other.

The following kinship table shows the relationship of those concerned in the case *Chipungari vs. Chiguwari* (14.11.36).

Son-in-law of totem Eland *chidawu*  
name *Mseyamwa*



According to Nyore, the women of Masendeke's wives' clans were *varamu* to Masendeke; to him (Nyore) they are *mai* (seeing Chitema is *mai*), but to Chipungari they are not related. It was therefore in order for Chipungari to take Mchanetsa to wife, but marriage between Mchanetsa and the son or grandson of Chitema would not have been approved.

Masendeke, reporting Chiguwari's speech, said:—" *Nda sungwa no mutero, ndi yende ku mukwasha wangu mukuru* "—I have been arrested for tax, let me go to my big son-in-law. Chiguwari calls Masendeke his big son-in-law, because the latter married his father's sister (*vatele*).

Where a man marries a woman who has a child by a previous marriage the child is known as *mwana wa pa utunda*. Thus, in the case of *Nyawo vs. Mdanga* (25/11/36) Nere said: "Mdanga (in court) is my elder brother, he is my (social) father. My father who bore me, Mdanga (his son having inherited his name), sent me to Shave. He said 'go and make arrangements for my child'. • I went."

After relating how the daughter was duly promised in marriage and how she became pregnant before being taken to wife, and how his father died shortly after the birth of the child, he continued: "The child he left was a babe in arms (who does not yet eat anything; a *muchече* can eat). Shave said, 'I have gained a wife with a child; I look after him as well.' It was Mutsuru. The child he 'makes' (calls) him '*wa pa utundu*'."

The term *wa pa utundu* apparently applies peculiarly to the relationship between a man and the child of his wife by some previous marriage. If the physiological father does not claim the child it will become *wa pa utundu* and will rank in most respects as if he were a full member of the new family. Children whose mother is inherited are not *wa pa utundu*.

*Chingombe yenda*—*chingombe wuzi* is an expression used by the Manyika to indicate a reciprocal marriage alliance between two families—a type warmly approved by them. Custom does not approve of the marriage of a man to his son-in-law's sisters—this would complicate the relation-



ship of father-in-law to his son-in-law too much but a marriage between male children and the sisters or daughters of sons-in-law is highly approved. Not only does this cement the bonds between the clans, but "cattle are delivered as *rowora* and then cattle come back as *rowora*", and this is thought to be a happy arrangement. Thus, Mandisodza's sister Tinakesu married one Makenzie. Mandisodza's son Frank may legally marry Makenzie's sister. It would be said that Frank married his *mkwamba* or *mukwasha*.

### SOCIAL RELATIONS : SEXTABOO

The elders in the community give considerable thought to the position of members of the community. No literature or other pastime directed or directs their attention to less personal matters, and their relations with the fellow members of their class, and with members of other classes, are subjects to which young and old give careful attention. Few interests are greater than this. Such questions as whether persons may or may not marry owing to the absence or presence of common ancestral blood, whether proper behaviour has been shown to other people, entities, or forces, are all matters which are thought upon and deliberated carefully when occasion to consider them arises. The Shona is thoughtful of his ancestry whose names have been handed down from generation to generation and whose spirits still live for him.

Like other primitives, Shona people have an intense fear of an incestuous union, or even of the incidence of incestuous relations in their midst. It constitutes an upset of the social pattern observed by their fathers and forefathers, and will therefore certainly bring a punitive visitation from the ancestral spirits which would result in deaths and disease among the tribe. We find accordingly that there are clear-cut rules which prohibit marriages between relatives, and that stress is laid on those lines of cleavage by which the community is divided into classes of persons who are related to an individual in each of the ways in which it is possible for Shona persons to be related.

Chief Nyoka came to complain that the daughter of his wife by a previous marriage (*mwana wa pa*

*utundu*) had wanted to marry the son of his "sister"—his *muzukuru*. He objected to the union. His mother and her mother were full sisters and were co-wives of his father. The fact that it was his half-sister did not affect the rules governing the social pattern.

We therefore see (1) how the position of every member of the father's clan is known by a kinship term which fixes his relationship to Ego and to other members of the clan; (2) how Ego's mother's clan is accorded terms which recognize the unity of her clan and fix its relationship to Ego; (3) how kinship terms recognize the unity of the man's clan in relation to his father-in-law's clan and establish the relationship permanently between present and future members of the clans.

The rules of patrilineal descent which are most obvious between father and child are only the commencement of the almost limitless field in which patrilineal descent plays a part. It has been made apparent that throughout the Colony there are a number of groups of Black people who have the same totemic animal and the same tribal name, and that they claim patrilineal relationship to each other. There are others which have the same totemic animal but a different tribal name; these do not in all instances claim relationship, and where they do the relationship is very distant. In examining whether or not persons who have the same totemic animal are closely or are distantly related to each other, their *chidawu* names often serve to show how near or how distant is the relationship. As a rule only the elders of the clan would know enough about the clan antecedents to establish this relationship.

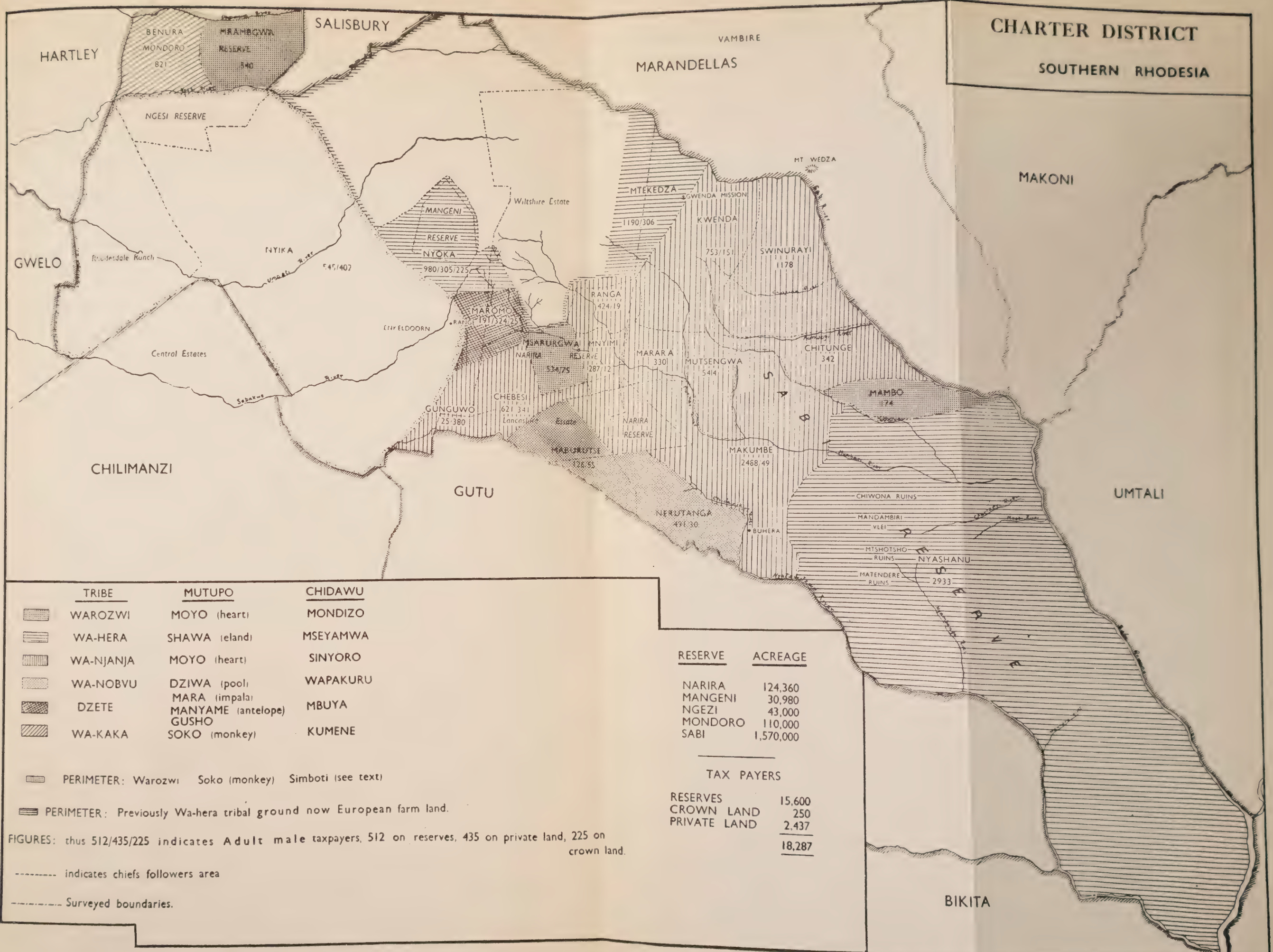
It has also been shown that the effective political and territorial unit is the clan, whose members are patrilineally descended from an ancestor whose name usually serves as the hereditary title of the chief. The clan together with those vassals who have tendered allegiance to the chief, and other adherents, make up the tribe. The original chiefs household had several family branches, and each of these constitutes a sub-clan. The senior member of the sub-clan is sub-chief and is a potential successor to the chiefship. The more domestic elements in the clan are the groups to

which, for convenience, we refer as the lineage, the household, and the family. Such divisions must be made for the understanding of legal issues. Finally, we have learned how kinship

terminology concerns itself with clans and patrilineal *groups*, and not with individuals, and that the relatives are divided according to a system which is different from that used by us.

---





The map shows the areas occupied by different clans in the Charter District. The clan in each case is the recognised proprietor of the ground it occupies and only a member of the clan can become a Chief. People of other patrilineal groups also live in the villages who owe allegiance to the Chief and the conclusion should not be drawn that only persons of one clan live in each area demarcated in the map.

v  
t  
r  
i:



TABLE I

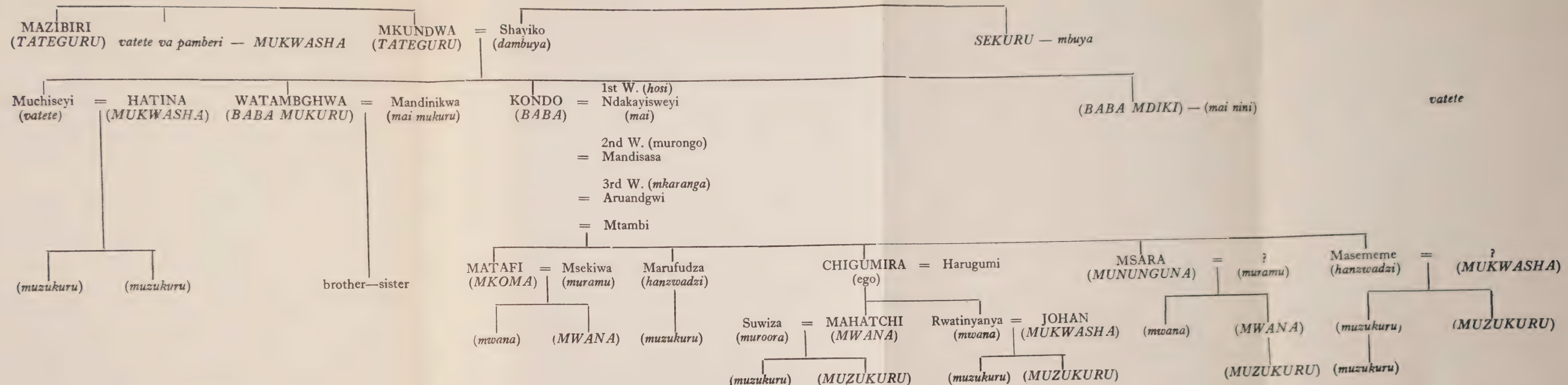
The lineage (near agnatic group); Blood relative through Father of Ego and latter's own descendants

CHIDAWU Mondizo

TRIBAL NAME Rozwi

CHIEF Msarurgwa

The same nomenclature is used whether a man or a woman be speaking, provided the brother-sister rule applicable to ortho- and cross sexes is observed; also, a woman's brother's wife is *muroora*.

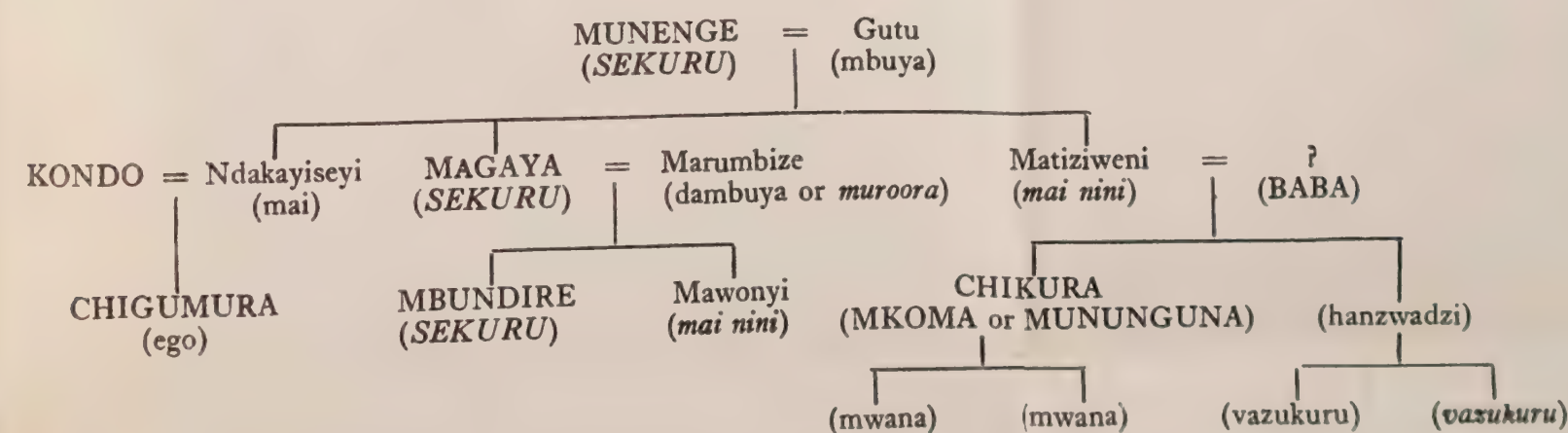


Note: Capitals are used to indicate males, small letters to indicate females.  
The father of a woman who marries a *MUZUKURU* is also a *MUZUKURU*.  
The spouse of any *mkoma* or *mununguna* is a *muramu*.

TABLE II

### THE SEKURU'S CLAN — AGNATIC GROUP OF THE MOTHER'S FATHER

Persons related to Ego through his mother (man or woman speaking)



RULES: Male of Mother's clan is *SEKURU*.  
Female of mother's clan is *mai nini*.  
Husband of any *mai* is *BABA*.  
Child of any *BABA* and *mai* is brother-sister.  
Child of any ortho-sex brother-sister is *mwana*, of any cross sex brother-sister is *muzukuru*.





# THE SO-CALLED ARTICLE IN XHOSA

By W. BOURQUIN

There are two Xhosa grammars which are officially recognized by the Cape Education Department and extensively used in all Native Primary and Secondary Schools as well as in the Training Institutions, where Xhosa is taught and is the subject of official examinations. One is:—

*A Xhosa Grammar. Revised and re-written in the New Orthography. By J. McLaren, M.A. Edited by G. H. Welsh, B.A. Chief Inspector for Native Schools, Cape Province, South Africa. Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd. London, 1942.*

The other one is:—

*A Grammar of Xhosa for the Xhosa Speaking. By W. G. Bennie, B.A. The Lovedale Press, 1939 (Mr. Bennie was also Chief Inspector for Native Schools in the Cape Province).*

In both these grammars the expression "article" is used for the initial vowel of the class prefixes of nouns. Is this expression justified or not?

This question will be asked by anyone who has occupied himself with Professor Doke's *Bantu Linguistic Terminology*, first published in 1935, in which he has tried to lay down what linguistic terms should be used in Bantu languages and what terms should be avoided. Under the heading "Article" he gives the following definition:

"A part of speech used before nouns to limit or define their application as in English 'a, an, the'. This term is not applicable in Bantu.

"Several writers have described the initial vowel of the noun prefix as an article, but its employment or non-employment is dependent (a) upon the type of Bantu language (for some have no initial vowels), and (b) upon various grammatical considerations; while the difference between the definite and the indefinite (conveyed by the article in English, Greek, French, Hebrew, etc.) is achieved in Bantu by entirely different means, e.g. by the use of an objectual concord."

Again he remarks under the heading "Initial":

"The term initial vowel refers particularly to the noun prefixes which commence in vowels and are dissyllabic, e.g. Zulu *umu-* in contradistinction to Sotho *mo-*. Some have considered the initial vowel to be an article, but each language has its own grammatical rules for elision or retention of the initial vowel".

The aspect and character of the initial vowel has occupied the minds of many grammarians of Bantu languages and the very question, whether it should or could be regarded as an article or not, has been much in dispute up to now. It seems therefore not superfluous to examine this question again and give it still more consideration, even if for this purpose only one language is selected. The material, however, which is available in Xhosa, is quite sufficient to justify some conclusions at least for this language. As Xhosa is very closely related to Zulu, also this language will be referred to whenever possible and desirable. In numbering the classes, Meinhot's system has been adopted.

I shall first give the different opinions as regards the initial vowel, expressed by scholars, who have treated Bantu languages in general as well as by grammarians of Xhosa and Zulu. Then I shall examine the question, whether the initial vowel should be regarded as a special grammatical element, show its use in Xhosa, draw conclusions about its significance and function, examine the cases when it cannot be applied and finally sum up, whether the term "article" in Xhosa is justified or not.

## I. *Different opinions about the initial vowel.*

Appleyard in his book *The Kafir Language* which appeared in 1850 mentions occasionally the initial vowel without however calling it an article and without dealing with it and its use in a special paragraph. He states that it is elided in some cases.

Seven years later, in 1857, Döhne published his *Zulu-Kafir Dictionary*. In the introduction pp.

xix and xx he analyses the class prefixes which he regards as primitive nouns and remarks:—

“When reduced to their real elements they contain as their first member a stem consisting of a single vowel.”

“They are called primitive nouns, because their first member seems quite to have the force of an indefinite article, indicating an object called or named. They have usually been called prefixes, but this term is improper for the main reason that it entirely overlooks the true nature of them as nominal forms on the one hand, and negatives their first element (as article) on the other. The strict observance of the first member must not be looked upon as an innovation.”

It seems that Döhne was the first to call the initial vowel an article and to postulate that it should be regarded as a special grammatical element.

The expression “article” was taken up by Dr. Bleek, who rightly has been regarded as the founder of Bantu philology. He uses it in his *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages* 1869. The first language he investigates is the “Kafir Species” and after having remarked, that the most usual forms in which the prefixes of nouns occur, are those preceded by a vowel, he continues (p. 150):—

“The initial vowel is chiefly absent in cases, where the employment of an article would be inadmissible, always in the vocative and in certain negative sentences. We thus recognize in this vowel an article, which according to its origin, is a pronoun that was in the first instance identical with the derivative prefix which it precedes.  
(p. 153):—

“Although it is clear that the initial vowel was originally a pronoun used with the force of an article, it can hardly be said now to have this power. Its employment appears mainly to depend on usage and scarcely upon any intention of thereby defining the noun. The position of this ancient article at the beginning of the noun accords with the general position of the demonstrative pronouns in Kafir, which

in this language precede the noun. Vestiges of this old article are also found in some other Bantu languages, and this renders it probable that this form of article was used at the period preceding the dispersion of the South African Bantu languages.”

When speaking about the “Bunda Genus” (p. 196) the expression article is again freely used by Bleek. He maintains that *o-* in the Bunda Genus possesses more clearly the power of an article than the initial vowel, which precedes the derivative prefixes in Kafir.

In 1886 J. McLaren published for the first time his Xhosa grammar under the title *An Introductory Kafir Grammar*. He says (p. 19):—

“In addition to the prefixes the nouns are also distinguished by the Article, which is the same in form as the characteristic vowel of the prefix before which it is placed. The article is used with both singular and plural nouns. In meaning it is definite, though often less strongly than the English ‘the’; it is used accordingly even where the English has the indefinite article or no article at all.”

He then enumerates the cases where the article is omitted.

One year later J. Torrend published his *Outline of a Xhosa Grammar* where he states (p. 17):—

“In the Xosa dialect an article is used more or less where we too have one, definite or indefinite, i.e., when it is wanted to limit or determine the extension of the following noun.”

Also in his *Comparative Grammar of the South African Bantu Languages*, 1891, he has several paragraphs on “articles” and says (p. 64):—

“Before we begin to study each class separately, it is necessary to forewarn the reader against a mistake which has often been made, viz. that of confusing with the classifiers a different kind of prefix, or rather a proclitic, which is usually met with before nouns in several Bantu languages, corresponding in some of them both to our definite and to our indefinite article, and in others to the definite article only.”  
L. Grout in his revised edition of a *Grammar of*



the Zulu Language, 1893, after having referred to the opinions of Döhne, Bleek and Torrend, continues (p. 292):—

"But for myself I could never find an article, or any place or use for one, either in the Zulu or any of its cognates. In his *Elementary Grammar of the Zulu-Kafir Language* Bishop Colenso says: 'There is no article in Zulu.' So say most others. In a very able *Grammatical Note on the Gwamba Language*, the Swiss missionary Berthoud, expresses regret, that he cannot endorse Dr. Bleek's opinion, that the initial vowel of the Bantu prefix had once the force of an article; and referring to Bleek's giving absolutely no proof that it could ever have been used as such, he adds: 'In fact the Bantu languages have no article, and their peculiar genius admits of none. Often and often have I examined this subject and I cannot conceive where room could be found to introduce a word which should be called an article, whether definite or indefinite.' In these views I can but regard Berthoud as in the right", Grout concludes.

Even more emphatic in the denial of an article is A. T. Bryant in his *Zulu-English Dictionary*, 1905. Here is his opinion (p. 95):—

"Others, again, like Döhne and Torrend, have thought to detect in these Bantu prefixes the presence of an article. Thus the latter, taking the prefix *um* of the first class, calls the *u* thereof an article, and the *m* a classifier. Such theories are oftentimes ingenious, but in our opinion, they are pure fancy; we do not believe that the statements upon which they are based, really exist. We think that, in the Native mind, the prefix *um*, or whatever it may be, will bear no more chopping up within itself, than would the accusative suffix *am* in Latin, were one so bold as to assert that the *a* therein served the purpose of an article and the *m* that of a case-indicator. For, alike in the Zulu as in the Latin, the theory would be found not to work."

A study on the language of the Ngoni, those Zulu tribes which migrated to Tanganyika Territory, was published by C. Spiss in 1904, *Kingoni*

und *Kisutu* (*Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Studien VII*). He says:—

"As in all Bantu languages there is also in Kingoni for the noun neither an article nor a gender".

C. Meinhof in his "*Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantusprachen*, 1906, is of opinion, just as Bleek, that originally all Bantu nomina when they were stressed, for instance as subject of a sentence, had a sort of demonstrative prefix. "We call it to-day the article".

He uses this expression also in his *Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, 1910, together with the expression *Vokalischer Anlaut* (initial vowel).

In 1912 in *A Grammar of the Sindebele Dialect of Zulu* J. O'Neil writes:—

"There is no article in Sindebele. Thus *umuntu* may either mean a person or the person."

In 1917 a comprehensive Zulu grammar was written by W. Wanger, *Konversations-Grammatik der Zulu Sprache*. In the introduction pp. xxvi xxvii he says, translated into English:—

"The question whether in the Bantu languages there is an article is still in dispute, a dispute about mere bagatelles, for the matter which is expressed by 'article' exists; it is therefore only a question of name. How *a*, *i*, *o*, *u* in Zulu should be articles is altogether not comprehensible. If it is said that *u* in Zulu is the definite and indefinite article, then the term 'article' becomes an illusion. Is it then advisable in Zulu or in other Bantu languages to attach a new meaning to the term article? For the practical didactician the answer can only be in the negative. Therefore we use the new name 'initial vowel' (*Vokalanlaut*)."

A. Werner, after having referred to the views of Bleek says in her *Introductory Sketch of the Bantu Languages*, 1919:—

"It is quite intelligible that he should call the initial vowel an article, especially as it is chiefly absent in cases, where the employment of an article would be inadmissible. However, as it is impossible by its means to make any distinction corresponding to that indicated by the use of 'a' and 'the' the initial vowel can hardly be called an article in our sense,"

Sir H. Johnston published in 1919 *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*. Here he speaks of preprefixes or additionally demonstrative articles (answering somewhat to the English *the*) which when definiteness of utterance was desired, preceded the actual prefix (p. 19).

"The preprefix is virtually identical with the 'article' of Aryan and Semitic languages." (p. 31).

A *Zulu Grammar* was written in 1915 by R. Samuelson who remarks:—

"There is no article in Zulu, but the definiteness or indefiniteness of the noun is to be collected from the context."

W. Wanger published again another grammar in 1927, which bears the title *Scientific Zulu Grammar, Vol. I*. He reaffirms his former views that in the Bantu languages there is no article in the usual sense. In some paragraphs, 290-296, he deals with the origin of the initial vowels. His theory is, that the prefixes were originally independent nouns, *mu* meaning "man, person", *si* meaning "place", etc.

"Now it is a well known fact that the Ntus, disliking mere monosyllables, try to lengthen them by one or the other means. In the present case, the means in our supposition was the anticipation of the respective vowel: *mu* became *umu*, *li* became *ili* and so on.

"Our theory, besides its intrinsic and historical probability has the great advantage of importing nothing into the initial vowels that is not vouchsafed by their origin, in other words to attribute to them nothing foreign to the Ntu mind and grammar. And this is precisely what those Ntuists have done, who claim for our initial vowel the functions of definiteness and even demonstration. Our anticipated *u* before *mu* merely lengthens the original monosyllable or emphasises it, nothing more."

It has been mentioned already that Professor C. M. Doke is of opinion, that the term article is not applicable in Bantu. It is therefore not surprising that in his *Textbook of Zulu Grammar* third edition 1939, this term is not used. Apart from that he makes no comment whatever on the

initial vowel and does not attach any significance or function to it. He only mentions that under certain circumstances the initial vowel may be elided, giving examples.

In his article *The Growth of Comparative Bantu Philology* ("African Studies" March, 1943 p. 55), when referring to Torrend's *Comparative Grammar* he remarks:—

"A section is given on 'Articles' in which he considered the initial vowel of the noun prefix of certain languages as a definite article: he has not been alone in this unwarranted assumption."

We record now in detail the opinions expressed in the two latest Xhosa grammars which formed our starting point.

McLaren-Welsh p. 26, says:—

"It must now be noticed that the prefixes of nouns are themselves composite, consisting first of an initial vowel, which is of the nature of an article, and second the prefix proper. In meaning the article is definite, though less strongly so than the English article 'the'. The article is used with proper and abstract as well as with common nouns."

On page 53 full rules are given as to its use and non-use. Bennie expresses the following views, (p. 43):—

"The initial vowel has a certain defining force, and its omission always extends the influence of the union. In view of the defining influence referred to, which is clearly felt by the Xhosa-Speaking, and in spite of the fact that its use is very different from the use of the English definite article—as that in turn differs in its use, from the French and the Greek—we shall in this book speak of it as the 'Article'."

Further he says on p. 153:—

"The force of the article in Xhosa is difficult to define. It is more definite than the English 'a', but in general it is less definite than 'the'. The student will best acquire a 'feeling' of its effect by comparing instances of its omission with parallel instances of its use in the writings of accepted authorities."

Cases of the omission of the article are then enumerated. Bennie has certainly known Doke's *Bantu Linguistic Terminology*, for in the preface he



acknowledges that he is indebted to Professor Doke for valued criticism and suggestions. He has however obviously against the views of the latter not decided to discard the term "article".

It is indeed most remarkable, that such contradictory views about the initial vowel stand side by side, or that the given facts are so differently interpreted, that whereas some attach certain functions to the initial vowel, others do not do so at all.

It might seem that difference of opinion is perhaps due to the fact that there is no agreement as to what the functions of an article are. The definition given by Doke in this respect seems however to form quite a good and sound basis, which can be accepted by all, namely that an article "limits and defines the noun in its application".

We shall therefore examine whether the initial vowel in Xhosa exercises this function or not.

## II. *Is it justified to treat the initial vowel as a special grammatical element?*

Before giving examples of the use of the initial vowel, this question should be answered. Most of the authors, whose opinions have been recorded, assume that the initial vowel does not originally belong to the prefix proper, whilst others regard it as an essential part of the prefix, which, as Bryant says, will bear "no chopping up within itself" in the Native mind. But such a view certainly overlooks the fact, that in Xhosa and Zulu the Natives themselves do make distinctions and use the nouns in certain cases without initial vowel. This is usually referred to as "elision" of the initial vowel. But this so-called elision has nothing to do with the elision of vowels for instance in consequence of quick speaking, when two vowels follow each other, as in *sifun' ukuhamba* (we want to go), where usually the first vowel is elided. To speak of elision conveys the idea that the vowel originally had been expressed, but that it was dropped for some reason or other, as for instance also in *ukumka* (to go away) in place of *ukumuka*, *lamla* (mediate) for *lamula*.<sup>\*</sup> The non-

use of the initial vowel in Xhosa and Zulu follows however quite distinct rules, which show that in such cases the initial vowel is not simply elided, but is altogether out of place and was never originally expressed. Its use would not only offend the Native ear, but would be regarded as grammatically wrong, or even as conveying another sense. These cases, which will be given later in detail, show clearly, that in the Native mind the initial vowel exercises some function. Therefore also the theory of Wanger cannot be accepted, that the initial vowel is nothing more than a lengthening of the original monosyllable. Its sudden non-use or "elision" would be most difficult to explain and would seem to be quite arbitrary.

This is confirmed also by the fact that different adjectival and relative concords must be used in Xhosa according to whether a noun has the initial vowel or not. This would certainly not be the case if the initial vowel were merely "elided". It shows quite clearly, that it is a grammatical element, which has also grammatical effects on the following connection.

*Umkhonzi othembekileyo*, a faithful servant.  
*Mkhonzi uthembekileyo!* Faithful servant!

*Inkabi endala*, an old ox. *Le nkabi indala*, this old ox.

*Amadoda amakhulu*, the great men. *Akukho madoda makhulu apha*, there are no great men here.

That the initial vowel is not part and parcel of the prefix appears also in those cases, where there is no prefix at all. In Xhosa and Zulu all proper names have the initial vowel *u*, and although they are regarded as belonging to the first class, they have no prefix *m* or *mu*. It could hardly be assumed that this prefix was lost or had been dropped and was originally employed.

Such proper names and some other nouns treated in the same way have been assigned already by Torrend to a special subclass of class 1, which in Zulu and Xhosa grammars is now styled as 1a. Doke has closely examined the rules governing this class in his paper *The Significance of Class 1a of Bantu Nouns*.<sup>1</sup> He considers however the

<sup>\*</sup> It would be better to call this substitution of syllabic *-m* for the syllable *mu*, the force of the submerged *u* being still there. [Ed.]

<sup>1</sup> *Festschrift Meinhof*, 1927.

vowel *u* as prefix. Also Appleyard had done so, thinking that it was some contraction of *um*. The same view is held by Wānger who says (*S.Z.G.* p. 62): "This *u* is not the initial vowel, but the remnant of the determinative *mu*". As far as I can see no Bantu language uses the prefix *mu* before proper names. It must further be noted, that in the Vocative, where in Xhosa the prefixes proper in their original form usually appear or reappear, no *m* is found in class 1a. Thus *u* in Xhosa and Zulu must here be regarded as the initial vowel pure and simple. This is also the opinion of McLaren-Welsh (p. 154), where it is said that these nouns properly speaking have no prefix but only an article. The same view was already held by Bleek who speaks of such nouns as "nouns, in which we find the article, but no derivative prefix. Here, as a rule, the prefix has not been elided, for the simple reason, that these nouns have not been formed with the prefix of the first (*m*-) class".

It may be further mentioned, that also in the Ilamba language an *u* appears before proper names, for example *u-Yakobo*, according to G. N. Anderson, *Tentative Studies in Ilamba Grammar and Phonetics*, 1942. He maintains that it is the initial vowel.

Again, all the borrowed words from English and Afrikaans have no prefix whatsoever in Xhosa although they are ranged into a special class, mostly class 9, whereas in Zulu also class 1a is used. To such nouns only the initial vowel of the respective class is added, for instance *i-tafle*, table from Afrikaans *tafel*; *i-bokhwe*, goat from Afrikaans *bok*; *i-golide* from English *gold*. Those foreign words which have apparently the prefix *si*, as *isi-leti* from English *slate*; *isi-tena*, brick, from Afrikaans *steen*, have been placed into this seventh class, as after the initial *s* of the stem an *i* was inserted for easier pronunciation and then the combination was wrongly regarded as prefix. Originally only the initial vowel *i* had been used in forming them. Any foreign word can easily be incorporated into the Xhosa language by merely placing the initial vowel *i* of class 9 before it.

But quite apart from these considerations which result from the study of Xhosa itself, a compari-

son with other Bantu languages offers further proof. Some have the initial vowel, others—probably the greater part—do not have it. The interesting fact is that those which have got it, are not restricted to a special area, but are found right from the North down to the South and Southwest. Amongst them are Nkonjo, Nyoro, Kerewe, Rundi, Ziba, Masaba, Ganda, Sango, Ilamba, Safwa, Nyakyusa, Kinga, Bena, Lamba, Herero, Ndonga, Kuanyama, and Kongo.

Whether all Bantu languages originally had the initial vowel and lost it in the course of time is still an open question. Bleek thought it probable that this form of article was used at the period preceding the dispersion of the South African Bantu Languages. This might indeed have been possible as some of those which still have the initial vowel, show a tendency to neglect it or drop it. A good example of this process is the development of Ngoni from Zulu. Other languages show the initial vowel in some classes only, for instance Ila in class 9 (with Smith class 8) where an initial *i* is recorded. Smith says however that "the initial *i* of this prefix is unstable and very liable to be lost". Anderson says in respect of Ilamba that the initial vowel "never carries the stress and is not strongly sounded in rapid speech". Johnson gives quite a number of languages where now only traces of the initial vowel, which he calls preprefix, are found.

All this is proof of the fact that the initial vowel is not a vital part of the prefix proper and could be detached from it without affecting the character and function of the prefix itself.

If the other possibility is taken for granted, that not all Bantu languages originally had the initial vowel, then it is the more evident, that the latter should rightly be regarded as a special element which in course of time was added to the prefix.

Again it must be noted that all those languages which still have the initial vowel, have also certain fixed rules, just as in Xhosa and Zulu, when the initial vowel cannot be employed. This clearly shows that some grammatical function was or is still connected with it.



### III. The use of the initial vowel in Xhosa.\*

In the following we shall examine when nouns with the initial vowel are used and how far this conforms with the use of the articles in English. I shall use the orthography which has been officially adopted by the Education Department, although some objections could be made especially to word division and the introduction of uncommon symbols. Most of the examples are taken from the literature available in Xhosa.

The initial vowel in Xhosa is "u, i, a" according to the different classes corresponding to the vowel of the prefix proper. It coalesces with preceding "a" and becomes "o, e, a". *Isebe lomthi* for *la-umthi*, the branch of the tree, *indlu yenkosi*, for *ya-inkosi*, the house of the chief, *isandi samaza*, for *sa-amaza*, the sound of the waves.

1. Indefinite article in English—initial vowel in Xhosa.

*Kukho imbali eyinyaniso yehase elidumileyo elasinda umninilo.*

There is a true story of a famous horse which saved its master.

*Indlela elula yokufumana inyamakazi kukumba umnxhuma.* An easy way to get game is to dig a pit.

*Wathetha ixefa elide.* He spoke a long time.

*Ukuba indoda ibulele enye ibihlawula isizi enkosini.* If a man had killed another one he paid a fine to the chief.

*Ndaphupha ndibona umntu ephethe incwadi ngesandla emhlana enomthwalo omkhulu.* I dreamt, I saw a man, a book in his hand and a great burden upon his back.

*Kwakha kwadibana ingonyama nenguluḽe emanzini zize kusela.* Once a lion and a bush-pig met at the water coming to drink.

*Ukuba umntu unenxeba, ma liggunywe ngesiziba esicocekileyo.* If one (*lit.* a man) has a wound, it should be covered with a clean bandage.

*Wabona inyoka ilele endleleni, wachola ilitye wayibulala.* He saw a snake lying in the road and picked up a stone and killed it.

\* The Editors regret that typographical difficulties make it impossible to distinguish the vowels in the Xhosa and the article in the translation, as marked by the author from her own in the MS. [Ed.]

*Kwagqitha indoda yasemzini ihamba nenja.* There passed a stranger going along with a dog.

2. Words which have the indefinite article in English form their plural without article. In Xhosa however the initial vowel is required.

*Abathwa bakholisa ukumba imifuno ngezingxa zentsimbi nezemithi nangeenzipho zabo.* The Bushmen usually dig edible herbs with iron and wooden sticks (sticks of iron and of trees) and with their finger-nails.

*Kumazwe anezigxa namawa neentaba zonwaba zande kunene ibokwe.* In countries with stony and bushy places, rocks and mountains goats, feel at ease and increase very much.

*Le ntaka inoncedo ebantwini, kuba ibulala into eninzi yezinambuzane ezikhathazayo ezinje ngemibungu, noophungu-phungu, namaqanda eenkumbi, nemiqikela.* This bird is of help to the people for it kills a great many troublesome insects such as maggots, chrysalises, eggs of locusts and wingless locusts.

*Upahla lwenziwe ngezibonda ezimiswa phezu kodonga zibethelelwe kulo ngezikhonkwane zemithi emide.* The roof is made from poles which are erected on top of the wall and nailed to it with long wooden pegs (pegs of trees).

As in Bantu the plural is expressed by special classes which are formed just as are the singular classes by prefixes, it is only consequent that also here the initial vowel is used. By itself it conveys no notion of the singular or plural.

3. In English definite article—in Xhosa initial vowel.

*Iphel' apho ke intsomi kaNomeva.* Here ends the story of Nomeva.

*Ilizwi lenkosi laba ngumtetho kula madoda.* The word of the Chief was law for these men.

*Amaphiko okhosi made omelele.* The wings of the hawk are long and strong.

*Bonke abafazi bebe nabantwana ngaphandle komfazi wenkosi.* All women had children except the wife of the chief.

*Umsebenzi wamadoda kukuzingela nokuphakula ubusi.* The work of the men is to hunt and take out honey.

*Lilo ke izembe endilifunayo.* This is the axe I want,

*Ingingane yezi zinto ke ibanga ukuba ndilile.* The thought of these things makes me cry.

*Ngexefa elimisiweyo.* At the appointed time.

*Ma bagoduke abantwana kuba ilanga se lit/honile.* The children should go home, for the sun has set already.

*Kuloko busuke ubusuku bamkhathaza kwa nje ngemini.* But the night was as troublesome to him as the day.

*Kulungile ukuba sivuke kunye neentaka neenyosi.* It is good if we arise with the birds and the bees.

*Nayo ingonyama yambona kwa oko.* Also the lion saw him at once.

If the noun which has the definite article in English is the object in the sentence, frequently the objectival concord is used.

*Ukuyiphatha kakuhle indlu ngumsebenzi womfazi.* To keep the house in order is the work of the woman.

*Wose ke ulibone isango.* You will then see the gate.

*UPhalo waye ngumfo obe lixabisa ilizwi lamaphakathi akhe.* Phalo was a man who valued the word of his councillors.

*Le ngxolo izothusile umpangele zathi duu.* This noise frightened the guineafowls and they went off at once.

*Wayivula intlanganiso ngamazwi athi.* He opened the meeting with the following words.

*Ndakuza ndivuphakamis' umpu ukuba ndijolise, ndafumana okokuza eso sigodo somthi owileyo siyisithile ingonyama.* When I lifted the rifle to take aim, I found that the log of the fallen tree hid the lion from my view.

*Yada inxhanxhosi yayixhola inyoka yayibulala.* At last the secretary bird pecked at the snake and killed it.

*Wowafuman' apha ke amasikho nezithethe zase-manyangeni.* Here you will find the customs and traditions of the ancestors.

This use of the objectival concord is according to Doke "the nearest approach to the significance of the definite article in Zulu" (p. 278). I have recorded however in Xhosa quite a number of examples where the objectival concord is not used although the object is definite.

*Apho sobona abadala bephethe izitsaba zabo.* There we shall see the Elders with their crowns.

*Yadada indoda yawela umlambo.* The man swam and crossed the river.

*Nguhani na oza kuthwala inyama ayise endlwini?* Who will carry the meat and bring it into the house?

*Lilo eli ixhego elitye inyama.* This is the old man who ate the meat.

*Asuka amaNgesi eza athimba iinkomo zama-Ndlambe.* Then came the Englishmen and seized the cattle of the Ndlambe.

*UGaba wamthuka wathi yinto exhalise umzi wonke.* Gaba reviled him and said, he was one who troubled the whole village.

*Bobabini babanga ubukhosi.* Both claimed the chieftainship.

*Akukho bantu bade bagqithe amaXhosa ngokubambelela kumasiko amadala.* There are no people who surpass the Xhosa in holding on to old customs.

*Waya kwaanga unyawo lwenkosi.* He went to kiss the foot of the chief.

*Ize ke indlovu ibaleke yakubona isithathi somlilo.* The elephant runs away when he sees the reflection of the fire.

*Ukuphikela ukubetha ngezenjana kuwisa nemi-thikazi emikhulu.* To strike persistently with a little axe fells even the greatest trees.

*Waza wacima isibane.* Then he extinguished the candle.

*Iintsiba zayo zihombisa amakhalipha akhethelwe ukufa kunye nokumkani.* Its feathers adorn the brave warriors who are selected to die with the king.

*Wavala ucango waphuma.* He closed the door and went out.

*Waza wathi akunxhamela ukuphepha umgxobo.* When he sought to escape the mire....

*Okwenyaniso ndithethe inene ngaye.* Truly I have told the truth about him.

*Unonelele imfundiso yelizwe lodwa.* He favours only the doctrine of the world.

On the other hand the objectival concord is used where the noun in English has the indefinite article.



*Wakha wayibona na ikati enawo amaphiko?*  
Did you ever see a cat with wings?

*Wasibeka isililo.* He broke out with a lamentable cry.

*Uthe akuwazuza amandla wabuya wahamba.*  
When he had got strength he walked again.

*Mus' ukukha uyiqaile into ungeqayikhumbuleli apho iya kuya iphelele khona.* Do not begin a thing not yet having considered where it will end.

*Ingonyama yinto engathi imthe xhamfu umntu idlale ngaye.* If a lion has caught a man it plays with him.

*Ningafumana phi ukumkani ongandikhuphayo ngokuhlakanipha?* Where can you find a king who can surpass me in cleverness?

*Andikwayifuni naminja ekhonkothayo ebusuku.*  
I too do not want a dog which barks in the night.

*Omnye umzingeli owaye khwele ehaseni wakha wawudubula umkhombe.* Another hunter who was on horseback once shot a rhino.

*Inakho ukulithwala ithokazi lenkomo njengoko ikati iyenje njalo impuku.* It (the lion) can carry a heifer as the cat a mouse.

*Unga thi ukhe wasiqhekeza isiduli ungabona iimbovane.* If you happen to break open an anthep you can see the ants.

*Inkunzi yenciniba inenchwangu inokumenzakalisa umntu ngokumxoga inhlabi ngozipho.* A vicious male ostrich can hurt a man by kicking and wounding him with his claw.

*Iinyoka zinokuwasukela zivabambe amasele neempuku kwa neentaka.* Snakes can pursue and catch frogs and mice as well as birds.

All these examples show that in Xhosa the objectival concord must have some other function than to mark the noun to which it refers as definite. Bennie in his grammar says (p. 101):

"Whether the concord is used or not is determined by the emphasis of the clause or sentence. It is inserted if the emphasis is *not* on the object; as, for example, when the object denotes something familiar, something that is already in the minds of speaker and hearer. If the emphasis falls on the object, e.g., if a contrast is drawn, or if the thing is mentioned in the narrative or discussion for the first time, then the object concord is not used.

The insertion of the object concord throws the stress on the verb".

Whenever the objectival concord is used either with definite or indefinite nouns the initial vowel must also be used.

4. In English no article—in Xhosa initial vowel.

#### a. Proper Names.

Names of persons, towns and countries require in Xhosa the initial vowel.

*UPhalo, uSandile, uJohn.* With and without the objectival concord: *Le ndawo yamqumbisa uNdabeni.* This angered Ndabeni. *Ndathi entliziyweni yam ndoza ndithume uDangalala.* I thought in my heart, I shall send Dangalala.

Names of countries and towns employ the initial vowel of the 9th class. *IAfrika; iJiputa,* Egypt; *iMonti,* East London; *iQonce,* King William's Town. Such names are however mostly used in the Locative. As it will be known the article is also used in French with names of countries: *la France,* France, *la Suisse,* Switzerland.

(Names of rivers have the article also in English *iGqili,* the Orange River; *umZimvubu,* the St. Johns River.)

b. Nouns designating material, matter, elements, substance when used in a general sense, are used in English without the article, as also abstract nouns. In Xhosa the initial vowel must be used.

*Ma kukhunjulwe ukuba umlilo nezibane zifuna umoya kwa nje ngabantu.* Let it be remembered that fire and lamps need air just as people.

*Ithi inkosi ma ndize kuyicelela ityuwa.* The Chief says I should come to ask salt for him.

*Izindlu zafulekwa ngencha.* The houses were thatched with grass.

*Udonga luya tyatyekwa ngodaka.* The wall is plastered with mud.

*AbaThwa baya dyoba iintolo zabo ngetyefu.* The Bushmen smear their arrows with poison.

*Ubomi bufutshane.* Life is short.

*Ukufa kuyinto eyoyikekayo.* Death is something terrible.

*Ezi nkabi zinamandla.* These oxen have strength.

*Iintlobo zokutya ezinokuthintela umfsetsa zezi : inyama entsa, ubisi, amasi, etc.* The different kinds of food to prevent scurvy are fresh meat, milk, sour milk etc.

*Wamphatha ngothando nangobubele.* He treated him with love and kindness.

*Yinto ni na yona inyaniso?* What is truth?

*Phakathi kwabo bekukho umfo onobuhokolo.* Amongst them there was a fellow with subtlety.

c. If a noun in English has a possessive pronoun no article is used, but in Xhosa the initial vowel is required.

*Abantwana bam, my children; inkabi yakhe, his ox; abahlobo bethu, our friends; izindlu zabo, their houses.*

This is not surprising as the possessive concord is here used just as with nouns. Literally the above expressions mean "the children of me, the ox of him, the friends of us, the houses of them." There is however an emphatic form which is placed before the noun.

*Abam abantwana se bemkile.* My children have already gone.

*Eyakhe inkabi yathengiswa.* His ox was sold.

*Ezabo izindlu azifani nezenu.* Their houses are not like yours.

Here also the initial vowel must be used. These expressions are really relative constructions meaning: "Who are mine the children have already gone. Which is his the ox, etc."

Constructions with and without the objectival concord:

*Ude emzuzwini wawutyhila umxhelo wakhe kumfazi wakhe.* At length he revealed his mind to his wife.

*Yizani niwanqhine amazwi am.* Come and witness my words.

*AbaThwa baya dyoba iintolo zabo ngetyefu.* The Bushmen smear their arrows with poison.

*Zithemba ukuthi ubuthongo bodambisa ubuphakuphaku bakhe.* Hoping that sleep would settle his nervousness.

Sometimes a noun with the possessive pronoun in English is expressed in Xhosa with the initial vowel only.

*Kuloko indoda leyo isuke yafaka iminwe ezindlebeni.* But the man put his fingers in his ears.

*Baya thanda abaThwa ukuyithambisa imizimba ngamafutha.* The Bushmen like to rub their bodies with fat.

*Uthe omnye umfo waphakamisa umpu.* Then another man lifted his rifle.

d. Nouns in connection with *-onke*, "every, all," must have also the initial vowel.

*Wonke umntu, every person; yonke into, every thing; bonke abantu, all people; onke amasimi, all fields.* The noun may precede *-onke, umntu wonke, into yonke, etc.*

#### IV. *Conclusions about the significance and function of the initial vowel.*

After having examined when the initial vowel is used in Xhosa, the question arises, what it signifies. At the first glance one might get the impression, that the initial vowel is employed nearly everywhere, where a noun is used. Just because it is used where in English the definite, indefinite or no article at all is employed it seems indeed difficult to understand what it really signifies. One thing however is clear, namely that the initial vowel is not the exact equivalent of either the definite or indefinite article.

Bennie said in his grammar "that the force of the 'article' (initial vowel) in Xhosa is difficult to define, that it is more definite than the English 'a' but in general less definite than 'the'." This view is shared by McLaren-Welsh. But if the initial vowel corresponds to some extent to both the indefinite as well as the definite article in English, it must certainly refer to something which is evidently common to both articles, to a quality which both possess. That something which is common to both is the fact, that they are defining or restricting the noun in one way or another. Therefore both are rightly called "articles", for as the definition given by Doke says, the function of the article is to "limit or define the application of nouns".

It is just this function of defining the noun to some degree which is exercised by the initial vowel in Xhosa, with the difference however, that the defining or restricting force is exercised, as one may say, from a different point of view or in a different way of thinking from that of European languages.



Supposing you have the following question : "What do you see on that mountain?" and supposing the answer is : "I see a tree", then in English as probably in most European languages the starting point in the mind of the person who replies is the notion of "tree". His eye fell on one specimen of those things which are called "trees". If subsequently a second person were asked : "Do you see the tree?" he might answer "Yes I see the tree". By this answer he would express, according to European thinking that from the objects which are called "trees", he sees the one mentioned, the special tree.

In Xhosa if such questions are asked, the starting point in the mind of the person who answers lies further back. He does not start with the notion of "tree", for there might be quite a number of other objects, which could be seen by him, if he were looking close to the mountain, people, animals or other things. If his eye then meets its object, he recognises that out of the many possible objects it is the object "tree" which he sees. So he does not answer exactly as in English "I see a tree", namely a specimen of the things known as trees, but his answer is *ndibona umthi* which might be translated "I see it—tree".

In short in English out of the existing *trees* one or a certain tree is defined, whilst in Xhosa out of the existing *objects* the object "tree" is defined by the initial vowel. Whether *umthi* is "a" tree or "the" tree, is so to say of secondary importance to the Xhosa speaker.

Herein lies the difficulty of defining the relation of the initial vowel to the European articles. Sometimes it corresponds to the definite article, sometimes to the indefinite. This is the reason why Wanger for instances rejects the term article for Zulu and Xhosa, for "if it is maintained that *u* in Zulu is the definite and indefinite article then the designation article becomes an illusion". This statement however overlooks the fact that in English the definite article has different meanings just as the indefinite article has likewise different meanings and there are cases in English, where the definite and indefinite article means really the same and can be used alternately without altering

the sense of the sentence in the least. Take the following examples.

The stork has red legs. A stork has red legs. Storks have red legs.

The cat sees well in the dark. A cat sees well in the dark. Cats see well in the dark.

The gumtree grows much quicker than the oak. A gumtree grows much quicker than an oak.

The anvil is indispensable for the blacksmith. An anvil is indispensable for a blacksmith. The anvil is indispensable for a blacksmith. An anvil is indispensable for the blacksmith.

The lion is stronger than the leopard. A lion is stronger than a leopard. Lions are stronger than leopards.

In the last example you have no certain lion or leopard in your mind as the definite article implies in other cases. "The" lion and "the" leopard stand as representatives of their kind amongst other animals. Likewise the expression "a" lion, "a" leopard has here a different sense from that when you say for instance "Yesterday I shot a lion". Whether the definite or indefinite article is used makes no difference in the meaning of the sentence. This can be said of all the other sentences given above.

The fact that both articles can be used alternately shows that there is some doubt what best to say, as there does not exist a special generic article and as none of the other two properly fits the case. For in such sentences, also in the European mind, the starting point is not "lion" and "leopard", but "animals" of which lion and leopard are a special kind. "The" and "a" lion means in this sentence the same, namely, that animal which is lion.

Here the case is perfectly met in Xhosa by the use of the initial vowel. The above sentence in Xhosa reads *ingonyama inamandla ngaphezu kwenqwane* which means "it-lion is stronger than it-leopard". There is no ambiguity whatsoever, no uncertainty whether the expression is quite fitting. The meaning of both the English definite and indefinite article is in this case perfectly expressed by the initial vowel.

It would however be wrong to say that the initial vowel expresses the generic article only.

Just as in English use is made of the definite and indefinite article to express the generic article, so in Xhosa, the other way round, use is made of this kind of generic article to express the other two, whereby the context often helps to clarify the meaning.

After these considerations it will be easily understood, why in Xhosa the initial vowel is used with proper names. If you say "John beats Jim" no article is needed in English for in your mind the starting point is John and Jim respectively and this needs no further defining. In Xhosa however you say *UJohn wambetha uJim*. Out of a number of persons it is he, John, who beats and it is he, Jim, whom he beats. Also in German the article can be used with proper names, *der Sepp, die Resi*.

Still more comprehensible will be the use of the initial vowel in connection with nouns designating material, substance, quality as well as abstract nouns, as they are mostly employed in a sort of generic sense. Therefore the employment of the initial vowel is especially fitting, whereas again the European languages are somewhat at a loss what best to say, some using the definite article, some no article at all. So we say in English "life is short", but in French *la vie est brève*, German *das Leben ist kurz*. Again in English "air and light are necessary for health", French *l'air et la lumière sont nécessaire a la santé*, German *Licht und Luft sind nötig für die Gesundheit*. In all such cases Xhosa is absolutely consequent and uses always the initial vowel.

In judging the relation of the two European articles to the so-called article in Xhosa it must always be kept in mind, that all three partake of the same function to define the noun in its application, but that they do so from a different point of view. In spite of that the same results are in most instances achieved.

Although I have refrained from expanding on other Bantu languages which use the initial vowel, I may be allowed to cite one remark, which is made by G. N. Anderson for the Ilamba, which shows that Xhosa does not stand quite alone in the use of the initial vowel. He says (p. 12): "The initial vowel defines, limits, emphasizes,

points out. One may call it a pointer. It may serve as a demonstrative or definite article".

#### V. When the initial vowel cannot be used in Xhosa.

It is surprising to learn after careful scrutiny in how many cases the initial vowel cannot be employed in Xhosa and Zulu. But just these cases will show us still more clearly for what purpose the initial vowel is used and why therefore it is impossible to employ it in certain cases.

1. The initial vowel has no place in the vocative.

*A, kumkani!* Hail, King!

*Hlala apha, Vena!* Stay here, Vena.

*Godukani zizwe, liphelil' ityala!* Go home people, the case has come to an end!

*Madoda, bafazi, bantwana!* Men, women and children!

After the personal pronouns *wena* and *nina* (you, sing, and plur.) the initial vowel is accordingly also not used, as the following nouns are likewise properly vocative forms.

*Wena t/hawe lamat/hawe!* You, Prince of princes!

*Nina bahlobo bam!* You, my friends!

It is by itself evident that in the Vocative nothing in the nature or force of an article can stand. Also in European languages the article is out of place and to speak of elision would be wrong. In Zulu too no initial vowel is used in the Vocative.

2. The same is the case after the absolute personal pronouns *mna*, I and *thina*, we.

*Mna, mzali walo mntwana!* I, parent of this child.

*Mna mbongi yesizwe!* I, poet of the tribe.

*Thina bantu bantsundu, sithi!* We Natives say.

*Thina, zinkosi!* we chiefs.

*Iinkomo ziyindyebo yethu thina maXhosa!* cattle are the riches of us Xhosa.

As the pronouns "I" and "we" restrict the following noun right from the beginning to the speaker, it was evidently not felt necessary to further restrict it by the use of the initial vowel, whereas after the different absolute pronouns of the third person the apposition must have the initial vowel.



*Yena, ukumkani, wala ukubabona abathunywa.* He the king refused to see the messengers.

*Wona amaphakathi emka.* They the councillors went away.

Also in Zulu the initial vowel is not used after the absolute personal pronouns of the first person. Also in rare cases it is not used in the third person (Doke p. 80).

A remarkable example is given by Wanger for Zulu (K. p. 108) where he says that if the apposition expresses a lasting quality the initial vowel is dropped.

*Thina zoni*, we sinful men.

But : *Thin' izoni*, we (the definite) sinners.

This example shows quite plainly that it is just the use of the initial vowel which makes all the difference and gives the noun its definite meaning. Hereby he refutes his own assertion (*Scient. Z. Gram.* p. 59) that "those authors who attribute to our initial vowel any kind of definiteness go against palpable facts" and "that in the Ntu mind and Ntu speech there is nothing of definiteness about the initial vowel".

3. The initial vowel cannot stand after demonstrative pronouns.

*Le ngxolo izothusile iimpangele.* This noise frightened the guineafowls.

*Ngu bani na lo Qilo?* Who is this Qilo?

*Lonke eli xefa.* All this time.

*Akhule kunye loo makhwenkwe.* Those boys grew up together.

*Ezi nkabi zezikabani?* To whom do these oxen belong?

Also in English the article is impossible after the demonstrative pronoun, as it is a weakened form of the latter. Also in Xhosa the noun is sufficiently defined already by the demonstrative pronoun.

In Zulu the same rule applies, for instance *lababantu*, those people.

If the demonstrative follows the noun, which is possible in Xhosa, then the initial vowel is used.

*Umntu lo*, this man. *Ilifu eli*, this cloud.

This construction is less emphatic, and has another shade of meaning.

4. The initial vowel cannot be used if a noun stands after the emphatic demonstrative, which

is formed by putting the relative particle before the forms of the absolute pronoun. These forms are used to express our "the very" or the emphatic "the". Likewise they are used in forming superlatives. After such strong demonstratives another defining element was out of place. These forms are very extensively used in Xhosa.

*Ucinge wacinga eyona nto ma kayenze yona.* He thought and thought about the best thing he should do.

*Ndithi mna, eyethu indlela yeyona ndlela yobulumko.* I say our way is the way of prudence.

*Elona zembe libukhali lilo eli.* The sharpest axe is this one.

*Owona msonto usetyenziswa kakhulu ekwenzeni iingubo ngumqhaphuthe.* The thread mostly used in making clothes is cotton.

*Imbovane zezona zidalwa zinengqondo kunezinye.* Ants are creatures with more intelligence than any others.

*Oyena mntu uyindoda ngumlimi.* The real man is the farmer.

*Oyena mhlobo wabo omkhulu lihase.* Their greatest friend is the horse.

*Okhona kukhalipha okukho.* The true courage.

*Kakade awona madoda makhulu anesidima ngawona anobuntu.* Always the great and respectable men were those who showed humanity.

*Ndingaxola ukuba leloni hlwempu elizweni eli lam.* I would be satisfied to be the poorest man in my country.

*Eyona ndlela yokulima.* The proper way to plough.

For Zulu, Doke gives the following two examples:

*Yizonazinkomo*, they are the real cattle.

*Uyenamfazi*, it is the real woman.

5. In expressions where the object, when introduced, is not or not yet properly defined but where uncertainty exists about its nature, quality or existence, the initial vowel is not used. In English such expressions are mostly rendered by "any, anybody, anything, some, somebody, something". Very often the verbal concord *ku* is used in such sentences.

*Kwabonakala ukuba kukho nto igqiba amanzi*

*echibini*. It was clear that there was something which was finishing the water in the pool.

*Lufunisa phantsi apha nto lungayibāmbayo nokuba yimpuku nokuba yinkwali*. It (the hawk) searches down below for anything it might catch whether it be a mouse or a partridge.

*Kwaakho zwi lindikhalimelayo ngaphakathi*. There was some voice which rebuked me within.

*Zikhumbule ukuthi sifo sobugeza simbambe ngenitloko*. They thought that some mad frenzy had got into his head.

*Kule ndawo ke kukho lusizo na?* Is there in this place any relief?

*Kukho mntu ukhe wakuxelela into ma uthethe yona kule nto?* Is there anybody who ever told you what you should say in this matter?

*Kuthe ngethamsanga kweza mfo kum*. Luckily somebody came to me.

*Ukuba kukho ngozi ikhoyo*. If there is any danger.

*Yafika imvula yatsho kwazala machibi kwazala milambo*. Then the rain came on and pools and rivers became full (any pools and rivers).

*Kuwele bani wabuza*. There came someone and asked.

*Ebe senza sidudu, nto ni, nto ni, angafaki nento unina*. Whatever she made, some porridge or anything else the mother would take nothing.

*Kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi...* Once in a fairy tale...

*Ancama amadoda ukuba kukho chule lakuthetha liya kubuya livele nenye indawo*. The men gave up hope that there was any eloquent speaker who would again come forward with another point.

Often in such expressions the diminutive form is used.

*Ichola-chola zintwana zingaziwayo*. Picking up some small unknown things.

*Abahambi bebemana bephosa matyana xa badlula kule ndawo*. Travellers threw always some little stones when they passed that place.

*Ndingakhe ndizithethele lizwana na?* May I speak a little word in my own defence?

*Waza wabona ndlelana ibetha nxam*. Then he saw a little path leading alongside.

*Kanjalo kwaba kho malana ingaphandle yathi yafiyeka*. Also there was a little odd money left.

It is just the absence of the initial vowel in the examples given above which gives all the nouns an unrestricted general indefinite meaning. Here also mention might be made of the way riddles are asked.

*Ndinamntu wam, akazange eve ngqele nanini na. Lukwimi*. I have a man, he never feels cold. The tongue.

*Ndinanyoka yam, iluma ngomsila. Sisabokwe*. I have a snake, it bites with the tail. The sjambok.

*Ndinandoda yam, imi ngeenyawo ezintathu phofu ihamba ngonyawo olunye. Yikiliva*. I have a man who stands on three feet moves however on one foot. The wheelbarrow.

The expressions *ndinamntu*, *ndinandoda*, *ndinanyoka* imply that not a real man, a real snake is meant although they, so to say, partake of the nature of man and snake still being indefinite. If the initial vowel was used, for example *ndinenyoka*, it would mean: I have (actually) a snake.

For Zulu, Doke gives two examples (p. 280).

*Ubona-sihlalo na?* Do you see any chair?

*Bafuna-lutho na?* Do they want anything?

6. After the foregoing paragraph it will not be surprising that with the adjective *-thik*, a certain, the initial vowel is frequently omitted although this is not a strict rule.

*Kwabe kukho ndodana ithile*. There was once a certain young man.

*Kwathi ngamini ithile kulemfazwe*. It happened on a certain day in that war.

*Entsimini yakhe kwakukho mthi uthile*. In his field there was a certain tree.

*Kwafika imvuβu chibini lithile*. A hippopotamus came to a certain pool.

But with initial vowel: *emva kweentsuku ezithile*, after certain days.

*Inkwenkwana ethile*, a certain young boy.

7. Nouns used in forming adverbs, conjunctive adverbs or other adverbial expressions lose the initial vowel. The defined and restricted meaning of the respective noun is displaced by the more general notion it contains so that the initial vowel is out of place e.g. the noun "day" is used to express "when", etc.



From *ixa*, time:

*Ndiza kuthetha nawe, xa ubuyile.* I shall speak to you when you have returned.

*Maxa ifikileyo loo ndoda*, when that man arrived.

From *umhla*, day:

*Mhla weza kule ndawo*, when he came to this place.

*Mhlana ndaninika le mithi*, when I gave you these trees.

*Uyakufika namhla*, he will arrive to-day.

*Kodwa ke loo nto ihla mhla lowo*, but this happens seldom.

*Wena loo mthwalo wakho wazuza nawo ngokuthi ni mhla mnene?* How did you get this burden first?

From *imini*, day:

*Wathi uNamba mini wafa.* Namba said when he died.

*Yinto yamini leyo into enjalo.* Such a thing happens very seldom.

From *icala*, side:

*Easuke abantu ngenxa yesizunguzane babethe cala.* People through dizziness step beside.

*Ngoku ke ndihambe phambili ndedwa ndihamba ndilona-longa macalana onke.* Now I went alone in front looking everywhere.

From *ithuba*, opening, passage, gap:

*Eabuye bahamba thutyana.* Again they walked a little further.

From *umgama*, distance, space:

*Mgama nomzi wakowabo*, some distance from his home.

*Wakuyikhangela umi mgama*, when you looked at it from some distance.

*Wabona umfo ehamba malunga nabo mgama kodwa kuho.* He saw a man walking beside them yet at a distance from them.

From *umzuzu*, period of time, while:

*Sihlale mzuzwana samnika izandla.* We stayed a little while and then shook hands with him.

In forming adverbial expressions the prefix *bu* is sometimes used before nouns and verbal stems without the initial vowel. Without doubt this *bu* is identical with the prefix *bu* of class 12 whereby abstract nouns are formed. As it was however not meant to create new definite nouns but to use

the notion which the stems contained in a general sense, no initial vowel was placed before the prefix.

From *ubuphuthu-phuthu* hastiness:

*Ibuye buphuthu-phuthu iGuluneli ukuza eQonce.* The governor returned hastily in order to go to King William's Town.

From *icala* side:

*Iindlela zakho zigoso zityekele bucala.* Your ways are crooked and turn aside.

From *imini*, day:

*Elo lizwe lazeke bumini nje kubelungu.* This country is only recently known to the Europeans.

From *isisulu*, anything easily obtainable:

*Wayizuza busulu le nkomo.* He got this cow by chance or good fortune.

From *ukukrokra*, to be dissatisfied, angry:

*Yaphendula inkosi bukrokra.* The chief answered angrily.

From *ukufudumala*, to be warm, hot:

*Ubuzile uPhakasa bufudumala.* Phakasa asked hotly.

From *ukuncwina*, to sign:

*Iphendule indoda yathi buncwina.* The man answered sighing.

From *inkawu*, monkey:

*Siya kukhe sitsibe bunkawu senze ibalana ngo-Nompumza.* We shall first make some brief remarks about Nompumza (jump monkey like and recount a little story).

From *indaba*, news:

*Kwabe kukho nenye into abayibikayo noko kwakuthiwe yona boyincokola bundaba.* There was another thing which they were reporting, still it was said they would talk about it more in the way of gossip.

From *ukuhlala*, stay:

*UFunani ukhe walala buhlala.* Funani first lay awake.

Adverbs are further formed by the formative *ka*. If nouns are used in such formations they lose the initial vowel.

From *inene*, truth:

*Kanene ezi zilo zihamba-hamba ebusuku.* Truly these animals walk about in the night.

From *ubukhali*, sharpness:

*Wasiyaleza kabukhali.* He sharply warned us.

From *ubuhlungu*, pain:

*Yona enkulu ibokhwe ingamnquba umntu kabuhlungu ngeempondo zayo.* A big goat can painfully thrust at a person with his horns.

From *ukuvimba*, be stingy, and *isisa*, liberality:

*Lowo uhkwayela kakuvimba wovuna kwa kakuvimba; nalowo uhkwayela kasisa wovuna kasisa.* He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

The nouns expressing numerals as *ixixhenxe*, seven, *isibozo*, eight, *ithoba*, nine, *ifumi*, ten, *ikhulu*, hundred, *iwaka*, thousand also lose the initial vowel if adverbial numerals are formed with *ka*.

*Kasixhenxe*, seven times; *kalifumi*, ten times; *kalikhulu*, hundred times.

It is not difficult to understand why in all these adverbial expressions given in this paragraph the initial vowel cannot be used, as a general notion is expressed. Without going into details I may mention that the same method is adopted in Zulu in forming adverbs and conjunctive adverbs. Besides the prefix *bu* also *lu* is used without initial vowel. Wanger gives quite a number of examples pl. 583-86 (K.Z.).

8. Again the initial vowel is displaced if nouns are used to express the idea of an adjective. Usually such nouns are selected as have a characteristic quality which latter can also be applied generally to other nouns. So for instance the notion "wet" is derived from the noun "*amanzi*, water", the notion "hard" from "*ukhuni*, a piece of firewood." No real water or firewood is meant, as would be indicated if the initial vowel were used.

*Iingubo ezimanzi*, wet clothes.

*Umhlaba olukhuni*, hard ground.

From *ubukhali*, sharpness:

*Izembe elibukhali*, a sharp axe.

From *ubuthuntu*:

*Umkhonto obuthuntu*, a blunt assegai.

From *umthubi*, the milk of a cow on the first days after calving, used to express "yellowish, pale":

*Amehlo amthubi*, pale eyes.

From *usizi*, sorrow, grief:

*Kwehla into elusizi*, a sad thing happened.

From *uhlaza*, short, young green grass, used for "green or blue":

*Amagatya athambileyo aluhlaza*, soft, green, tender shoots of a tree.

From *iqhubu*, protuberance:

*Ameblo ayo azingqukuva ezimaqhubu*, its eyes are round and protruding. Also *ingqukuva* is a noun meaning "a person with a flat or stump head; an ox without horns". It is used to express the notion "round" (its eyes are protruding round things.)

Also in Zulu nouns are used in exactly the same way.

9. The initial vowel cannot be used in relative sentences where a possessive is indicated. The place where the initial vowel would stand is occupied by the relative concord. Also in English the article is impossible if the relative pronoun "whose" begins the relative clause. (The farmer whose horse was lost). The construction in English is however quite different from that in Xhosa and I do not venture to give an explanation why the initial vowel cannot stand. It must be remarked however, that the relative concord and the initial vowel are to all appearance closely related or have a common origin. It might be that on account of this close relation the application of the initial vowel was felt to be superfluous.

*Kodwa ke yinkunzi yodwa le imabala mahle kangaka.* It is only the male, whose colours are so beautiful.

*Kananjalo yintwana emonde mkhulu.* Again it is a little thing (the spider) the perseverance of which is great.

*Badibana nexhego lekati, into emehlo makhulu, eboya bukhuthukileyo kukwaluphala.* They met with an old cat, the eyes of which were big and the hair of which had fallen off from old age.

*Abantu abakhaya lisoloko laba sehlathini.* People whose home was always in the forest.

*Ndahlangana nomntu ogama lakhe belinguSidinile.* I met a man whose name was Sidinile.

*Umthi onkoko zibomvu.* A tree the seed of which is red.

*Kukho ezinye iimbovane ezintloko zinkulu, ezimihlatshi yomeleleyo.* There are other ants the heads of which are big, the jaws of which are strong.



*Inkwenkwana eminyaka ilifumi ubudala.* A little boy whose age is ten years (whose years are ten respecting his age).

*Ingonyama yinto entloko inkulu, endlebe zimfutshane, esinchi siliyaka-yaka, ezitho zomeleleyo, emsila mde.* The lion is an animal with a big head, short ears, dishevelled mane, strong legs and long tail (lit. the head of which is big, the ears of which, etc.)

The same construction is found in Zulu.

*Umuntu onja ifile,* the person whose dog is dead.

*Umfazi obuso bumhlophe,* the woman whose face is white.

10. In Xhosa the initial vowel is further not used after the interrogative *ni na*, what, of what sex, of what sort? In such questions the noun is not yet properly defined.

*Ufuna nto ni na?* What (what thing) do you want?

*Wazi ntaka ni na?* What sort of bird do you know?

*Uze ngandawo ni na?* On what business have you come?

*Ufuna mali ni na ngale nkabi?* What money do you want for this ox?

*Wenze bubi buni na le nto andoyikayo?* What kind of evil has he done that he is afraid of me?

*Andikhathali nokuba ndingahlangana nazinto zini na.* I do not care what things I might meet with.

For Zulu I find the same.

*Ufuna muthi muni?* What kind of medicine do you want?

*Babona salukazi sini?* What kind of old woman do they see?

On page 321 (Doke) however an example with the retention of the initial vowel is given. *Ufuna izimbuzi zini?* What goats do you want?

11. The initial vowel is not used in connection with the adjective *mbi*, another, if it follows the noun.

*Athabatha ndlela yimbi.* They took another road.

*Maxa wambi uThixo uthumela imvula maxa wambi uthumela ilanga.* Sometimes God sends rain, sometimes sunshine.

*Kwada kwafunyanwa malusi wumbi.* At last another herdboy was found.

12. The initial vowel is further not used in connection with the numeral one, *nye*.

*Bobabini bathetha ngaxeja nye.* Both spoke at one time.

*Kusasele mbuzo mnye qha.* There remains only one question.

*Masife kunye ngamhla mnye.* Let us die together on one day.

*Ngathi mna ngayo le'nto sizwi nye sonke.* I think that we all agree in this matter (are one word).

*Zonke iimbovane zamzi mnye zizalwa nina mnye eyinkosazana.* All ants of one place are born by one mother, the queen.

It must be recorded that sometimes in connection with other cardinal numbers the initial vowel is not used.

*Ukwazi ke kuntlobo mbini.* There are two kinds of knowledge.

*Untsuku ntathu ebulawa yintamo.* For three days he has pain in his neck.

*Kufuneka senze nto mbini.* We must do two things.

*Ibawza ziingcibi ibe macala mabini (ntlangothi mbini).* They are sharpened by experts on two sides (two edged).

*Yenzekwe ukugcina amanzi anokughuba ntsuku ntlanu nantandathu.* It has been made to keep water, enough for five or six days.

*Uyise wabuba xa waye nyanga ntandathu.* Her father died when she was six months old.

Here must also be mentioned the adverb *ndawonye*, together, from *indawo*, place.

*Wahlala ndawonye nathi.* He stayed together with us. This adverb is also used in Zulu. Another example for Zulu, given by Doke is *nhlizinyonye*, with one heart.

13. After "*kwa*, at, from or to the place of," and *ka* possessive concord of nouns of class 1a no initial vowel is placed.

*Sihlala kwaLuphindo.* We stay at Lupindo's place.

*Uvela kwaZibi.* He comes from Zibi's place.

*Ndiya kwamalume.* I go to my uncle's place.

*KwaBaca*, in Bacaland.

The usual possessive concords coalesce with the initial vowel, as *indlu yenkosi*, the house of the chief (*ya-inkosi*), *ilizwe labaThwa*, the country of the Bushmen (*la-abaThwa*). Before nouns of class 1a however *ka* is used.

*Ihase likabawo*, my father's horse.

*Isitya sikama*, my mother's dish.

*Abantwana bakaLudidi*, Ludidi's children.

*Umkukulwana kayise*, his father's grandchild.

*Indlu kaNobala*, the secretary's house.

In Zulu *kwa* and *ka* are used in the same way.

14. If the noun stands as predicate, no initial vowel is found to all appearance in Xhosa. Special copula concords are used which occupy the place of the initial vowel, all beginning with consonants.

According to the different classes they are as follows:

1 *ngu-*, 2 *nga-*, 3 *ngu-*, 4 *yi-*, 5 *li-*, 6 *nga-*, 7 *si-*, 8 *zi-*, 9 *yi-*, 10 *zi-*, 11 *lu-*, 14 *bu-*, 15 *ku-*.

Thus: *ngu-mntu* it is a man, *nga-bantwana* they are children, *ngu-mthi* it is a tree, *yi-mithi* they are trees, *li-lifu* it is a cloud, *nga-mafu* they are clouds, etc.

It must be mentioned however that the adjectival and relative concords used after such nouns having the copula are the same as are used after nouns with the initial vowel, and not those used after nouns without the initial vowel. As in Xhosa very strict rules are observed in respect of these two different sets of concords, it obviously implies—to say the least—that the initial vowel and the copula partake in some way of the same nature.

*Ngumntu olungileyo*, it is a good man. *Umntu olungileyo*, a or the good man. But: *Lo mntu ulungileyo*, this good man.

*Lilitye elikhulu*, it is a big stone. *Ilitye elikhulu*, a or the big stone. But: *Eli litye likhulu*, this big stone.

*Le nto ingumthi iyinto entle enomsebenzi*, a tree (this thing which is a tree) is a nice and useful thing.

The concord “*i*” is used as *nto* is without the initial vowel, whilst the concord “*e*” is used after *iyinto* as if it had the initial vowel.

It must be further mentioned that there exists a marked difference between Xhosa and Zulu.

The copula concords are not all the same. Besides that, forms with the initial vowel can be used alternately, with a change of tone however.

Thus in Zulu *ngumuntu*, it is a man, can also be expressed by *umuntu* only.

The expression “it is a stone” can have the following forms: *itshe*, *yitshe*, *litshe*, *ilitshe*, *yilitshe*.

They are chiefs: *ngamakhosi* or simply *amakhosi*.

In Xhosa only the above given forms are possible and strictly adhered to.

This difference between Xhosa and Zulu shows that the question of the copula is complicated and presents many difficulties. Some Bantuists maintain that the initial vowel is a weakened form of the copula or *vice versa* the latter a strengthened form of the initial vowel. There are widely divergent views between Meinhof, Johnston and Wanger.

I refrain from discussing this question any further as it touches the problem of the origin of the initial vowel. This however is beyond the scope of this paper, which is confined solely to the examination of the present use and function of the initial vowel in Xhosa.

15. Proper names and compound nouns.

a. Nouns are extensively used in forming proper names. If this is the case, they lose the initial vowel which originally belongs to their respective class and which characterises them as common nouns. Being now names of persons they are ranged into the first class and obtain a new initial vowel namely “*u*”.

Thus from *isipho* “a gift” the name *Sipho* is formed, from *isonwabo* “delight” the name *Sonwabo*. *Luzipho* comes from *uzipho* “nail claw”, *Ludidi* from *udidi* “row”, *Luswazi* from *uswazi* “switch”, *Madolo* from *idolo* (pl. *amadolo*) “knee”, *Mabandla* from *ibandla* (pl. *amabandla*) “assembly”. From *amagxa* “shoulders” the name *uMagxa* “gin bottle” is derived, so called from its high square shoulders, from *amarawu* “nettles” *uMarawu* “hedgehog”, from *amathupha* “buds of a tree” *uMathupha* name for the month of August, when buds appear.

b. A number of names are further formed with the prefixal formatives “*So*” and “*No*”, which



are supposed to be derived from stems meaning father and mother. In all such formations the initial vowel of the noun has to be omitted.

*Somfazi* "the father of the wife, a man's father in law."

*Somandla* "the father of power, the Almighty."

*Sobulumko* "the father of wisdom, the All-wise."

The prefix "No" is much more extensively used and baptismal registers will show many female names beginning with this formative.

*Nomalizo* from *amalizo* "presents, alms", *Nomathamsanqa* from *amathamsanqa* "benefits", *Nombulelo* from *umbulelo* "thanks", *Nomangesi* from *amaNgesi* "Englishmen".

Apart from Proper names other nouns have been formed in this way. *Unomeva* "a wasp" from *ameva* "thorns", *unonkala* from *inkala* "a crab", *unonqhayi* "a policeman" from *inqhayi* "an earthen bowl made of clay" as the helmets of policemen resembled them, *unondyebo* "treasurer" from *indyebo* "riches".

c. Compound names where the first part is a noun lose likewise the initial vowel, originally belonging to that noun.

*Langa libalele*, name of a Hlubi chief; *ilanga libalele* would mean "the sun is hot". *Mehlomane*, nickname for those who wear spectacles, meaning "Four-eyes", from *amehlo* "eyes" and *ne* "four". *Ntombizodwa*, a girl's name when there are no boys, from "*iintombi zodwa* "girls only". *Zwelifile*, boys name in war time, from *izwe lifile*, "the country is dead, at war". Other nouns formed in this way *undlefenide*, a donkey, "Longear", from *indlefe ende* "a long ear", *unziphonde*, springhare, "Longclaws" from *iinzipho exinde*, long claws", *uManzimdaka*, "Brownwater", a tributary of the Tsomo river from *amanzi amdaka* "brown muddy water".

d. If in a compound name or noun the second part is a noun, it is also in most cases used without the initial vowel.

*Indhulamithi* "the giraffe" lit. the one surpassing trees. *Amafanankosi* "those who die with the chief, the chiefs bodyguard". The expression *nankosi* in place of *nenkosi* where the initial vowel is present, makes it clear that not a special chief

is meant but any chief. *Indlalifa* "the heir, the one who eats the heritage (*ilifa*)". *Nkosiyamntu*, proper name of a chief, "Lord of man". *Yamntu* conveys the idea of man in general, whereas *Nkosiyomntu* containing the initial vowel would mean "Lord of the man" and imply the idea of a special man. *Lahlangubo* name of a place from *ukulahla* "to throw away" and *ingubo* "blanket"; it is a place where people once fled. *Umhlabangubo* lit. "Garment piercer" a troublesome weed, which clings to the garments of passers-by, from *ukuhlaβa* "pierce" and *ingubo* "blanket, garment". *Isinxibamxaka* "a honoured man, a councillor", from *ukunxiba* "wear" and *umxhaka* "ivory ring". *Isibethankunzi* "Bullbeater" a thorny shrub, from *ukubetha* "beat" and *inkunzi* "bull".

*Naantso ke into yenu, mathanda-zindaba!* Here is something for you, News-lovers.

*Siginyiwa iintwana zonke ngamahamba-ndaba.* We are made to swallow every little thing by news-mongers.

In this connection must be mentioned also the noun *umnini* "owner" after which the following noun always loses the initial vowel.

*Umninindla*, "Houseowner". *Umninintozonke* "The owner of all things, God".

In all formations given in this section stress is not laid on the noun as representing a single defined thing, but on the general notion it represents. Therefore it was felt that the initial vowel was out of place as it exercises a restrictive force.

Also in English in words like "Foureyes, Longear," the article is impossible.

In Zulu the same rules are adhered to in forming proper names and compound nouns and numerous examples are given by Doke and Wanger.

16. We turn our attention now to the last case where the initial vowel cannot be used, namely in certain negative sentences. Such cases are very numerous and just here it becomes exceedingly evident that, as the initial vowel exercises a restricting or defining force it was out of place in such expressions.

The initial vowel cannot be used if the noun itself is negated, if the object expressed by the noun does not really exist. In English, expres-

sions like "no, none, not any, none whatever" are used. If I say "I have no book", this book does not exist, therefore it is impossible in Xhosa to use the initial vowel, as a certain real, existing object is specified by it. So it is rendered by *andinancwadi*. If on the other hand I say "I did not see your book", the object is real, only the verb is negated. Therefore in Xhosa the initial vowel must be placed *andiyibonanga incwadi yakho*. If I should say *andibonanga ncwadi apha*, it would mean "I did not see any book here".

*Amaphiko azo akenzi ngxolo xa ziphaphazelayo*. Their wings make no noise when they are flying about.

*Le nyoka ayilumi mntu engagunjiswanga*. This snake does not bite anybody if it has not been incited.

*Mna andiboni ngozi*. As for me I do not see any danger.

*Kodwa akafumananga qhinga lakuya kumphuthuma*. But he did not find any device to go and fetch him.

*Andikhange nditye nyama iphekiweyo*. I have never eaten boiled meat.

*Ukuβa be ndingathandi tywala kangaka be ndingaselanga tyhefu*. If I did not like beer so much I would not have drunk poison.

After sentences where *ku* is the subject:

*Akukho mtsawe ungake avume ukufumane aphulukane nabantu bakhe*. There is no prince that will lightly lose his subjects.

*Akwaβonakala mntu uzayo*. There was nobody to be seen coming.

*Ayiphumi emweweni wayo ingathanga iqonde ukuβa akukho lufaba na*. It does not come out of its stony place before knowing that there is no enemy.

*Kwelo lizwe kwaye kungekho mivundla nazimfudo*. In this country there were no hares and no tortoises.

*Akuzanga kubekho kumkani wakha walawula ixefa elingaka ukuβa lide*. There was never any king who ruled such a long time.

After *nga*:

*Eli thole alikhathazi ngakutyhudisa xa kusengwayo*. This calf does not give trouble by pushing when the cow is being milked.

*Eli gosa lathanda ngamadoda kuβa laliwaphethe kakuhle lingazidli ngawonga nangagunya*. This official was liked by the men for he treated them well not being proud of his rank and power.

*Inkosikazi ayiyinanzanga nganto le nto*. The woman did not pay attention to this in any way.

After *na*:

*Kodwa ke noko akabanga nakuphuma*. But still he could not come out.

*Yonke loo nto ayinamsebenzi*. All this is of no use.

*Xa ungenakuya ngokwakho*. If you cannot go yourself.

*Imilenze yenciniba ayinaboya*. The legs of the ostrich have no feathers.

*Andinathemba*. I have no hope.

Any further nouns, including infinitives which are dependent on the first one, lose their initial vowels too.

*Zonwaba esibayeni sazo zingoni nto yamntu*. They were content in their fold not damaging anything of anyone.

*Waanabo ubuganga bokuthi alikwazi kunisa mvula*. You dared to say it could not cause rain.

*Isixeko sasimgama kungekho naxefa lakugijimela khona*. The village was some distance away and there was no time to run there.

*Ma kungaze kudle mntu siqhamo kuwe naphakade*. Let no man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever.

*Kuβonakale ukuβa uVelelo akasenanto yakuthetha*. It appeared that Velelo had nothing more to say.

*Phofu akukho mkhondo namzila wanto ngaphambili*. Now then there is no track or trail of anything in front.

*Ukuβa kungafiki kunchola nathuli nambewu zasifo enxebeni elo*. So that no dirt and dust and germs of any disease come into the wound.

*Kweza kugqitha apha inene elithile linganxibe nguβo yabukhosi*. There passed a certain man of rank not wearing uniform.

*Yinto engathe ni nankosi nabantu namthetho nasiko*. He neither regards prince nor people, law nor custom.

Further to illustrate the use or non-use of the initial vowel in negative sentences I give the following examples:



*Ke yena wayengenalo izembe.* But he had not got an axe. In a previous sentence it was stated that an axe would be useful. The existence of such an axe is not denied but stress is laid on the circumstances that the man had not got such an axe in his possession. So the initial vowel is placed. *Wayengenazembe*—without initial "vowel"—would mean "he had not got any axe".

*Andikwayifuni naminja ekhonkothayo ebusuku.* "I too do not want a dog which barks in the night." The man does not say that he does not want a dog at all, but the dog has been previously mentioned as a dog which barks in the night. The stress lies on the verb. He does not want such a dog. As the dog is defined the initial vowel must be used.

*Wayengenawo umlilo ayakuwoyikisa ngawo amaramncwa engenazo neentolo angathathisela ngazo, engenazixhobo.* "He had no fire with which he could frighten the beasts of prey, also no arrows to shoot with, no weapons at all". In this sentence *umlilo*, fire, and *iintolo*, arrows, have not the initial vowel. The fire is defined as "fire to frighten beasts of prey", the arrows as "arrows to shoot with". The stress lies again on the circumstance that the man has not got such fire and such arrows. *Izixhobo*, weapons, has no initial vowel. No special defined weapon is in the mind of the speaker. Stress is laid on the point that there did not exist any weapon, that he had no weapons at all. Therefore the initial vowel cannot be used.

17. If nouns are used predicatively in a negative sentence usually the form *asi* "it is not" is placed before the copulative concords.

*Asingumntu*, it is not a man. *Asiyintaka*, it is not a bird. *Asingabantwana*, they are not children.

It is however possible to place the form *asi* directly before the noun without the initial vowel.

Such expressions have another shade of meaning.

If the initial vowel is not placed the force of the negation is concentrated on the noun.

*Wagonda ukuba asimlambo lo.* He understood that this was no river (at all). If the sentence should read: *Wagonda ukuba asingumlambo lo*, it would mean: He understood that this was not a river (but something else).

*Umfazi wakhe ubengemntu uthethayo.* His wife was not a person who talked.

*Ikhuboka asinto yaziwayo thina.* A slave is not a thing known to us.

*Akunkosi yam wena.* You are not my chief.

*Kanti noko akanto.* And yet he is nothing.

*Izinto ezingazange zibonwe liso lamntu.* Things which have never been seen by any human eye.

*Sisifo esingenakunyangwa mntu emhlabeni.* It is a sickness which cannot be cured by anybody on earth.

In Zulu the same rules are observed in negative sentences:

*Akukho-zinkomo*, there are no cattle.

*Angiboni-muntu*, I see no person.

*Awuyikuphiwa-lutho*, You won't be given anything.

Doke calls such sentences cases of "absolute negation" in contrast to the following examples:

*Azikho izinkomo*, the cattle are not there.

*Angimboni umuntu*, I do not see the person.

Wanger distinguishes between "contrary and contradictory" negation. In the first case the initial vowel is retained, whereas it is omitted in the second case.

*Angi umuntu*, I am not a Native (but a European or Indian, etc.).

*Angi muntu*, I am no human being (at all).

*Aifikile incwadi*, the letter (referred to) has not arrived.

*Akufikile ncwadi*, there has arrived no letter (at all.)

These examples refute again Wanger's assertion that no kind of definiteness can be attributed to the initial vowel, for it is just its use and non-use which makes the difference in the sense.

## VI. Summing up.

It remains now to sum up the results which have been obtained and to see, whether they justify the use of the term "article". Professor Doke maintains that this term is not applicable in Bantu, as not all Bantu languages have the initial vowel and as the rules governing its use or non use are different in the various languages. But this by itself constitutes no reason to reject the term in any language if otherwise the initial vowel exercises the function of an article.

In re-examining the nature and character of the initial vowel in Xhosa and Zulu, we have come to the following conclusions regarding at least those two languages:

The initial vowel is a special grammatical element which does not belong to the prefix proper. Different adjectival and relative concords must be employed in Xhosa if the initial vowel does not stand. The use or non-use of the initial vowel is not arbitrary but follows exact rules.

These rules give a clue to the grammatical function which the initial vowel exercised and still exercises.

As it is used where in European languages the definite, indefinite or even no article at all is used, observers have been puzzled as to what it stands for.

It certainly is not the exact equivalent of either the definite or indefinite article. Still it exercises the general function which both of them—as articles—exercise, namely “to limit and restrict the noun in its application”. This function however is exercised from a different point of view from that of European languages. In the latter one or a certain object is defined out of like subjects, whilst in Xhosa an object is defined as such out of different objects. Therefore the initial vowel meets especially those cases where the article has the significance of a generic article. In such cases the European languages make use of both the definite and indefinite article, whereas in Xhosa the other way round this kind of generic article is used to express the definite or indefinite article. If the context does not sufficiently show which is meant, the shade of the meaning is arrived at by an additional demonstrative or concord. The substance of the article is however always the initial vowel.

That the initial vowel exercises the function of an article becomes even more evident from those cases where it cannot be employed. If the noun is already sufficiently defined as after demonstrative and some personal pronouns the initial vowel is out of place. Again the initial vowel cannot stand where the noun is undefined (some, any, a certain) or where the limited or restricted sense of a noun has been changed to a general notion as in

the formation of adverbs and adjectives from nouns. Again the initial vowel cannot be used if the noun represents an object which is unreal or non-existent, as in certain negative expressions.

To use the expression “initial vowel” is comprehensible if stress is laid on the fact that a vowel stands at the beginning of a noun. Its use becomes however somewhat anomalous, if this “initial” vowel does not stand at the beginning of a word but becomes the second or even third vowel coalescing besides that with another one, as for instance in *ihafe elinesilonda*, a horse with a sore.

The mere statement however, that a vowel stands at the beginning of a noun says nothing about its grammatical functions and to retain this expression is practically an admission that its function has not been understood. All the cases where the initial vowel cannot be employed will then seem to be quite arbitrary and disconnected, as no guiding principle is recognised, of which all the different rules are a natural and logical consequence.

Taking into consideration all the above given details of the use and non-use of the initial vowel as well as the circumstance “that the defining influence of the initial vowel is clearly felt by the Xhosa-speaking” (Bennie), I think that the expression “article” is fully justified and should not be debarred from Bantu Terminology.

The writers of both Xhosa grammars have rightly devoted special paragraphs to the article, as without that an important point in Xhosa grammar would have been omitted or left in the dark.

---

Professor C. M. Doke, who read the foregoing article in manuscript, writes:—

The foregoing constitutes a very valuable addition to our knowledge of Xhosa grammatical construction. As statements made by myself have been criticised by the writer of this paper, it is only right that I should point out certain things.

(i) I do not accept the term “article” in connexion with the “initial vowel” in Bantu because the vowel in question does not constitute



a separate word—it is but a constructional formative element, and therefore cannot be designated as one of the “parts of speech”.

(ii) I would refer the writer of this paper to paragraph 733 of my *Text-Book of Zulu Grammar* (4th edition), where is the following statement:—“Under certain circumstances *the initial vowel of a noun may be elided*, but wherever this is done (provided the resultant remains a noun) the noun becomes part of a new word-group, and ceases to be a separate word”.

Argument is at cross-purposes when Xhosa orthography, admittedly only partly conjunctive, is followed in its inaccurate present condition. For instance, in *andiboni-mntu* (with no initial vowel) we are dealing with a single word-group, while in *andiboni umntu* there are two words: *umntu* will always occur when it is a separate word. This is proved by the difference between *lomntu* and *umntu lo*, a difference of structure and element emphasis, not of meaning, the first

element being the more important. With the elision of the initial vowel in the formation of vocatives, the word in question has ceased to be a noun, and has become an interjective.

(iii) That the elision or retention of the initial vowel has its part to play in the significance of definiteness (of an object), and in conveying both axiomatic negatives and positives is not to be gainsaid. For this I would refer the writer to paragraphs 836-838 of my *Zulu grammar*; but would again stress that self-standing nouns are not to be found apart from the initial vowel.

(iv.) The writer points out that the Xhosa “article” cannot properly parallel either the definite or the indefinite article in, say, English. Why then force the use of the term? It is surely adequate to use the term “initial vowel” for this formative, and to study its significance as a formative. It is certainly not a “part of speech”.

# ETUDE GRAMMATICALE D'UNE FABLE DU CAMEROUN FRANÇAIS

MADAME RENÉ DUGAST

Secrétaire de la Société d'Etudes Camerounaises—(Centre local Cameroun de l'Institut Français d'Afrique Noire) à Douala

Les Banen (population de 25.000 âmes seulement) vivent dans le Sud-Ouest du Cameroun sous Mandat français ; ils se situent entre les 5° et 4°30 de latitude Nord, et les 10°20 et 11° de longitude Est, dans un quadrilatère incliné N.E.—S.W. Le pays est montagneux et couvert de grandes forêts.

Population agricole, qui ne connaît pas le groupement par villages, les Banen vivent dispersés dans la région qu'ils occupent. Ils sont très éloignés de toute agglomération européenne. Au surplus, le groupement spécialement étudié par nous, les Ndiki—dont nous rapportons ici une observation linguistique—ne se trouve pas directement en contact avec des tribus de langue différente. Les plus septentrionaux des Banen, placés à la limite Nord de la grande forêt équatoriale, ils sont isolés des autres populations, d'une part par un *no man's land* étendu, vers le Nord et le N.W., d'autre part, par d'autres tribus également Banen, qui les protègent des influences linguistiques étrangères. Nous pensons que la langue des Ndiki doit être plus pure que les dialectes immédiatement voisins, parce que non en contact direct avec les parlers Basa, Bafia, Yambetta, Nyokon.

La langue Banen présente, en grammaire et en syntaxe, les caractéristiques générales des langues bantu. En phonétique, on ne peut être aussi affirmatif, quoique les phonèmes n'aient rien de ceux des langues soudanaises. Mais, dans la série des voyelles, il faut noter la grande fréquence du son *ə* (qui souvent, mais non pas toujours, est la déformation de *a*). La nasale *ŋ* est également fréquente. Notons aussi que les mots, généralement de radicaux monosyllabiques, se terminent le plus souvent par une consonne.

Pour permettre la comparaison avec d'autres langues africaines, nous rapportons ici une courte

fable. Pour en faciliter l'analyse grammaticale, les mots en sont numérotés. Lorsque deux mots identiques présentent la même valeur grammaticale, ils portent le même chiffre ; pour deux mots identiques de valeur grammaticale différente, nous avons donné un chiffre différent.

Dans les analyses brèves que nous faisons de chaque mot, nous avons touché à divers points que nous ne pouvons traiter, dans ce court travail, dans leur ensemble. Voici cependant quelques explications complémentaires :

I—*Les classes* de substantifs de la langue Banen sont les suivantes :

sing. :	<i>mo-</i> , <i>mu-</i> , . . . .	plur. :	<i>ba-</i> , <i>b<sup>wə</sup></i> , (êtres humains) ;
	<i>mo-</i> , <i>mu-</i> , <i>o-</i> , <i>u-</i> ,	„ :	<i>me-</i> , <i>mi-</i> , <i>e-</i> , <i>i-</i> ;
	<i>bo-</i> , <i>bu-</i> , . . . . .	„ :	<i>ma-</i> , <i>m<sup>wə</sup></i> ;
	<i>bo-</i> , <i>bu-</i> , . . . . .	„ :	<i>be-</i> , <i>bi-</i> ;
	<i>e-</i> , <i>i-</i> , <i>y-</i> , . . . . .	„ :	<i>be-</i> , <i>bi-</i> ;
	<i>he-</i> , <i>hi-</i> , . . . . .	„ :	<i>to-</i> ; <i>tu-</i> ;
	<i>ne-</i> , <i>ni-</i> , . . . . .	„ :	<i>ma-</i> , <i>m<sup>wə</sup></i> ;
	<i>o-</i> (subst. verbaux)	„ :	<i>ma-</i> , <i>m<sup>wə</sup></i> ;

Indiquons aussi les mots invariables, qui ne sont pas une classe spéciale.

A propos de tel ou tel mot, nous signalons, en passant, la complexité des questions qui se posent dans l'étude des classes : deuxièmes pluriels, forme des mots invariables, séries de mots sans singulier régulier, alternances toutes différentes des règles normales et atteignant jusqu'à la consonne du radical. (Voir les n° 3, 38, 95, 105, 109 par exemple).

II—A propos des *verbes*, la fable citée nous a fourni des exemples variés de leurs formes dérivées : applicative et locative (qui sont une seule et même forme), causative, intensive, diminutive, réversive et stative. La liste pourrait en être



plus longue, car il existe encore les formes : réci-proque, simultanée, réversive-passive, passive et la voix moyenne. Sans parler des deux formes causatives : directe (agir directement sur . . .) et indirecte (faire agir sur . . . par l'intermédiaire d'une tierce personne).

Sous le n° 21 de l'analyse grammaticale, nous expliquons en note en bas de page les trois catégories de verbes par leurs conjugaisons. Mais nous n'avons pas pu expliquer avec certitude tel ou tel détail : qu'est exactement la troisième catégorie des verbes ? nous ne le savons pas. Et certain temps nous est resté obscur (voir n° 101).

III—Notre texte vernaculaire montre qu'entre une consonne finale et la consonne initiale du mot suivant apparaît une *voyelle de liaison* : d'un mot à l'autre, deux consonnes ne sont jamais en contact. Parfois même une voyelle supplémentaire s'accroche à une voyelle finale (voir les n° 23, 43, 53, 86, 91).

IV—Nous avons fait allusion, dans l'analyse grammaticale, aux désinences de *la forme progressive*. Donnons ici quelques indications annexes. Ces désinences sont placées en suffixe au radical, quand le verbe est dans sa forme primitive ; elles s'insèrent en infixe dans les formes dérivées, se plaçant entre le radical et la désinence de la forme dérivée.

Dans la fable rapportée, ces désinences du progressif sont soit *ak*, soit *ək*. Dans d'autres verbes non rencontrés ici, nous aurions aussi *ək*. La voyelle est, en effet, en accord phonétique avec le radical et suit la règle phonétique générale de la langue banen. Une voyelle étant donnée, elle ne peut être en contact, dans un même mot, qu'avec une ou deux autres voyelles. Il existe des incompatibilités de sons. Les mêmes règles se retrouveraient aussi bien dans le cas de ces désinences du progressif que dans celui des voyelles de liaison, auxquelles nous avons fait allusion plus haut.

V—Nous avons marqué du signe ' de légers *coups de glotte*. Qu'est l'*arrêt glottal* en langue banen ? Nous ne pouvons le déterminer avec sûreté : ce qui est certain, pourtant, c'est qu'il ne fait pas partie intrinsèque du mot. Il n'est pas non plus un cas grammatical, quoiqu'il existe

toujours entre une proposition principale et une proposition subordonnée.

Il semblerait plutôt qu'un arrêt glottal indique qu'une pensée n'est pas absolument terminée et que l'action de la proposition suivante est en corrélation avec celle de la première. Des propositions sans lien de coup de glotte constituent des "tout" séparés, sont des images qui se succèdent et qui sont des entiers par elles-mêmes. Il est cependant parfois difficile de sentir pourquoi l'arrêt glottal n'apparaît pas.

Un coup de glotte est toujours sur une voyelle, soit voyelle finale, soit voyelle-liaison, soit voyelle surajoutée à une autre (voir les n° 11, 28, 41, 57, 74, 80, 97, 105, 108).

Indiquons enfin que la syllabe de l'arrêt glottal est toujours de ton bas.

Nous notons le coup de glotte par le signe ' pour éviter la confusion avec l'apostrophe qui marque une élision (n° 14, 25, 50, 65, 3 (entre 66 et 67), 83, 84).

VI—*Les tons* : entre les deux tons principaux, haut et bas, se trouvent deux tons intermédiaires, l'un plus haut que l'autre, et les tons ascendant et descendant.

Le ton moyen est un ton grammatical lorsqu'il s'applique à l'indicateur de temps des verbes dans les propositions relatives et les propositions subordonnées circonstancielles. Nous les expliquons au cours de notre analyse.

Les tons ascendant et descendant sont des combinaisons de tons haut et bas,—des liaisons de tons, pourrait-on dire. Nous les expliquons aussi chaque fois qu'ils se présentent.

Notre intention n'est pas de faire ici une étude complète des tons, de même que nous ne fournissons pas d'autres détails sur la question très complexe des verbes ou celle de la phonétique. Nous nous bornons à donner ces quelques indications sommaires, dans l'espoir qu'elles pourront servir à des études comparatives de langues.

Ces lignes sont trop brèves pour faire sentir la beauté de la langue banen, beauté dans la finesse et la variété de ses expressions : langue descriptive par excellence, où chaque détail spécial tend à évoquer une image précise et vivante.

Yəmunək<sup>21</sup> na<sup>2</sup> mək<sup>3</sup>.  
le caméléon et le léopard.

<i>Mek</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>kanda</i> <sup>4</sup>	<i>beseke</i> <sup>5</sup>	<i>be</i> <sup>6</sup>	<i>yəmunək</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>fəl</i> <sup>7</sup>	<i>A</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>na</i> <sup>9</sup>	<i>nekak</i> <sup>10</sup>	<i>indi</i> <sup>211</sup>	
le léopard	(particule de mouvement au passé ancien)	les mesures de sel	du	caméléon	vint emprunter.	Il	(particule du passé proche)	la promesse	donna	
<i>mil</i> <sup>12</sup>	<i>elendal</i> <sup>13</sup>	<i>o</i>	<i>'sabon</i> <sup>14</sup>	<i>Yi</i> <sup>15</sup>	<i>mil</i> <sup>12</sup>	<i>elendale</i> <sup>13</sup>	<i>natomb</i> <sup>16</sup>	<i>Yəmunək</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>nakan</i> <sup>17</sup>	
mois	six	pour	payer.	Ces	mois	six	passèrent.	Le caméléon	alla	
<i>obat</i> <sup>18</sup>	<i>A</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>naka</i> <sup>19</sup>	<i>many</i> <sup>20</sup>	<i>konda</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>mil</i> <sup>12</sup>	<i>elendal</i> <sup>13</sup>	<i>Noi</i> <sup>e</sup>	<i>na noi.</i>	<i>Twɔɔ</i> <sup>22</sup>	
demandeur.	Il (part. de mouvement au passé proche)		de nouveau	ajouta	mois	six.	Ainsi	et ainsi.	Les années	
<i>naho</i> <sup>23</sup>	<i>tofand</i> <sup>24</sup>	<i>Yəmunək</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>naliy</i> <sup>25</sup>	<i>isim</i> <sup>26</sup>	<i>A</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>na</i> <sup>9</sup>	<i>hikoko</i> <sup>27</sup>	<i>bata</i> <sup>28</sup>	<i>a</i> <sup>8</sup>	
finirent	deux.	Le caméléon	se fâcha	très.	Il	(part. du passé proche)	le tambour de bois	ramassa,	il	
<i>nasubwək</i> <sup>29</sup>	<i>a</i>	<i>nasubwək.</i>	<i>A</i> <sup>30</sup>	<i>na</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>biəmunək</i> <sup>233</sup>	<i>bikim</i> <sup>33</sup>	<i>eliaken</i> <sup>34</sup>	<i>be</i> <sup>35</sup>	<i>nundu</i> <sup>36</sup>	
battit,	il	battit.	Il		les caméléons	tous	appela,	ils	furent pleins	
<i>wai</i> <sup>37</sup>	<i>ombel</i> <sup>38</sup>	<i>A</i> <sup>8</sup> <i>na</i> <sup>9</sup>	<i>baba</i> <sup>39</sup>	<i>len</i> <sup>40</sup>	<i>a</i> <sup>8</sup> <i>se</i> <sup>41</sup>	<i>Mek</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>ka</i> <sup>42</sup>	<i>bwami</i> <sup>43</sup>	<i>bohin</i> <sup>44</sup>	<i>niak</i> <sup>45</sup>
sa	cour de cases.	Il	leur	dit à	il que :	"Le léopard	(partic. du passé ancien)	ma dette	a mangée.	
<i>A</i>	<i>se</i> <sup>41</sup>	<i>me</i> <sup>46</sup>	<i>baka</i> <sup>47</sup>	<i>nuyəkato</i> <sup>48</sup>	<i>me</i>	<i>ɔwə</i> <sup>49</sup>	<i>mb</i> <sup>50</sup>	<i>a</i>	<i>ɔ</i> <sup>51</sup>	<i>bwami</i> <sup>43</sup> <i>bohin</i> <sup>44</sup>
Il	que	je	suis	maigri,	je	mourrai,	mais	il	(partic. du futur précis)	ma dette
<i>niak</i> <sup>52</sup>	<i>Noi</i> <sup>e</sup>	<i>me</i> <sup>46</sup>	<i>ndusi</i> <sup>53</sup>	<i>me</i>	<i>se</i> <sup>4</sup>	<i>bulil</i> <sup>54</sup>	<i>esombale</i> <sup>55</sup>	<i>bwasu</i> <sup>56</sup>	<i>bwakim</i> <sup>57</sup>	<i>mond</i> <sup>58</sup>
mangera.	Ainsi	je	veux	je	que	demain	l'aube	nous	tous,	l'homme
<i>le</i> <sup>59</sup>	<i>tikən</i> <sup>60</sup>	<i>tu</i> <sup>61</sup>	<i>ɔkasukunuək</i> <sup>62</sup>	<i>wai</i> <sup>37</sup>	<i>ombel</i> <sup>38</sup>	<i>Ba</i> <sup>63</sup>	<i>se</i> <sup>41</sup>	"ō"	<i>Noi</i>	<i>esombale</i> <sup>55</sup>
pas	reste à,	nous	irons nous déverser.	sa	cour de cases.	Il	que	oui.	Ainsi	l'aube
<i>ba</i> <sup>63</sup>	<i>nakak</i> <sup>64</sup>	<i>ba</i>	<i>n</i> <sup>65</sup>	<i>ombela</i> <sup>38</sup>	<i>wo</i> <sup>66</sup>	<i>mek</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>undusi</i> <sup>67</sup>	<i>ba</i> <sup>63</sup>	<i>nayayen</i> <sup>68</sup>	<i>Bamote</i> <sup>69</sup>
ils	allèrent,	ils	(partic. du passé proche)	la cour	du	léopard	remplirent,	ils	dépassèrent.	Quelques-un
<i>nabuk</i> <sup>70</sup>	<i>eyan</i> <sup>71</sup>	<i>bitwəninin</i> <sup>72</sup>	<i>A</i> <sup>73</sup>	<i>mek</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>nahonyo</i> <sup>74</sup>	<i>a</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>nok</i> <sup>75</sup>	<i>ba</i>	<i>ndoho</i> <sup>76</sup>	
étaient plus	sans	sièges.	Le	léopard	se réveilla,	il	entendit	ils	parlent	



<i>mweŋeŋ</i> <sup>77</sup>	<i>wai</i> <sup>37</sup>	<i>ombel</i> <sup>38</sup>	<i>A</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>si</i> <sup>a78</sup>	<i>mwəs</i> <sup>279</sup>	<i>fəmi</i> <sup>a80</sup>	<i>a</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>na</i> <sup>9</sup>	<i>biəmunaḱ</i> <sup>282</sup>	<i>boŋ</i> <sup>281</sup>				
beaucoup	sai	cour.	Il	que il	les yeux	sort,	il		les caméléons	aperçut				
<i>biŋi</i> <sup>32</sup>	<i>na</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>biŋ</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>wow</i> <sup>83</sup>	<i>a</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>nab</i> <sup>84</sup>	<i>a</i>	<i>ndo</i> <sup>85</sup>	<i>wai</i> <sup>a86</sup>	<i>kal</i> <sup>87</sup>	<i>a</i>	<i>nəhol</i> <sup>88</sup>	<i>a</i>	<i>se</i> <sup>41</sup>
nombreux	et nombreux.		Celui-ci	il	était	il	(partic. du temps présent)	le	discute,	il	parla un peu	il	fue ;	
<i>A</i>	<i>meko</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>fam</i> <sup>89</sup>	<i>endo</i> <sup>90</sup>	<i>biamia</i> <sup>91</sup>	<i>besck</i> <sup>5</sup>	<i>Agg</i> <sup>92</sup>	<i>a</i>	<i>bak</i> <sup>93</sup>	<i>o</i> <sup>94</sup>	<i>menyam</i> <sup>a95</sup>	<i>hikaki</i> <sup>95</sup>			
"Ah	léopard,	sors ;	donne	mes	mesures de sel.	Toi	il	est	tu	la viande	almes			
<i>son</i> <sup>297</sup>	<i>niaka</i> <sup>98</sup>	<i>bwəs</i> <sup>56</sup>	<i>bwəkim</i> <sup>57</sup>	<i>Meko</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>nabat</i> <sup>99</sup>	<i>okolom</i> <sup>100</sup>	<i>isim</i> <sup>26</sup>	<i>A</i>	<i>nəhol</i> <sup>88</sup>					
viens,	mange	nous	tous."	Le léopard	commença	avoir peur	très.	Il	parla un peu					
<i>a</i>	<i>se</i> <sup>41</sup>	<i>Etase</i> <sup>101</sup>	<i>me</i> <sup>46</sup>	<i>bia</i> <sup>102</sup>	<i>besck</i> <sup>5</sup>	<i>endo</i> <sup>103</sup>	<i>A</i> <sup>30</sup>	<i>nahian</i> <sup>104</sup>	<i>o</i>	<i>mim</i> <sup>a105</sup>	<i>a</i> <sup>8</sup>	<i>naka</i> <sup>19</sup>		
il fue :	"(partic. du futur immédiat)	je	tes	mesures de sel	donne "	Il	revient	à la case,	il	(partic. de mouv. au passé proche)				
<i>besck</i> <sup>5</sup>	<i>kondonak</i> <sup>106</sup>	<i>a</i>	<i>nahianəki</i> <sup>107</sup>	<i>Noi</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>baka</i> <sup>93</sup>	<i>si</i> <sup>a108</sup>	<i>enget</i> <sup>109</sup>	<i>na</i> <sup>9</sup>					
les mesures de sel	enleva,	il	rendit.	Ainsi	il	est	que	la ruse	(particule du passé proche)					
<i>bweŋeŋ</i> <sup>a110</sup>	<i>yayen</i> <sup>68</sup>													
la grandeur	surpassa.													

## LE CAMELEON ET LE LEOPARD

## (Traduction Libre)

Le léopard alla emprunter de grandes mesures de sel chez le caméléon. Il lui promit de les lui payer après six mois. Les six mois passèrent et le caméléon alla en demander le paiement. Mais il dut ajouter six autres mois et cela plusieurs fois. Deux années s'écoulèrent ainsi. Le caméléon entra dans une grande colère. Il prit son tambour d'appel et le frappa pendant longtemps. Ayant appelé tous les caméléons, la cour au milieu de ses cases en fut remplie. Il leur dit alors : "Le léopard a dû gaspiller ce qu'il avait pour me payer ; il pense que je suis maigre et que je vais mourir. Son idée est de ne pas me rembourser. Voici ce que je veux : demain à l'aube—et personne ne doit être absent—nous irons tous envahir sa cour de cases." Ils dirent : "Bien, c'est entendu." Ainsi à l'aube tous y allèrent, la cour

du léopard en fut pleine ; ils furent même trop nombreux et plusieurs ne purent y pénétrer. Lorsque le léopard se réveilla, il entendit parler dans la cour, il voulut jeter les yeux dehors et vit la multitude des caméléons. Celui qui était en palabre avec lui, lui dit simplement : "Sors, et donne-moi mes mesures de sel. Toi qui aimes la viande, viens et mange-nous tous." Le léopard eut très grand' peur et répondit : "Je te donne tout de suite tes mesures de sel." Etant revenu à sa case, il prit le sel et le restitua. Ainsi la ruse vint à bout de la grande taille du léopard.

## NOTES

1—*yəmunaḱ* (...), substantif de la classe *e-*, *i-*, *y-*, plur. *be-*, *bi-* (plur. *biəmunaḱ*).

2—*Na*, conjonction "et".

- 3—*mekə* (.), substantif invariable au singulier et au pluriel. A remarquer que le classificateur *me-* est un pluriel (de la classe *mo-*, *mu-*, plur. *mè-*, *mi-*).
- 4—*kanda*, sont deux particules verbales; elles sont séparables du verbe: 1°) *ka* (.), indicateur du passé ancien;—2°) *nda* (.), indique un mouvement de rapprochement par rapport à l'endroit où se rend le léopard.
- 5—*bɛsɛk* (.), de la classe *e-*, *i-*, *y-*, plur. *be-*, *bi-* (sing. *ɛsɛk* ou simplement *sɛk*).
- 6—*be*, particule du génitif, accordée avec le mot *bɛsɛk*.
- 7—*fɔl*, verbe *ɔfɔl* (.), "emprunter," au passé ancien avec l'indicateur *ka* (dans *kanda*). Le complément d'objet s'insère en effet toujours entre l'indicateur de temps, séparable du verbe, et le verbe lui-même.
- 8—*a*, pronom personnel sujet de la 3<sup>e</sup> pers. du sing., de la classe des personnes, car dans le langage des contes les animaux sont souvent personnifiés.
- 9—*na* (.), indicateur du passé proche, de ton haut, séparé du verbe par le complément d'objet.
- 10—*nekak* (.), de la classe *ne-*, *ni-*, plur. *ma-* (plur. *makak*).
- 11—*indi*, verbe *windi* (↑.), "donner" au passé proche avec la particule *na* (n° 9). A ce temps, le ton du verbe devait être (., bas + moyen); il est devenu (., ↓) à cause du ton bas du coup de glotte.
- 12—*mīl* (↑.), de la classe *mo-*, *mu-*, plur. *me-*, *mi-* (sing. *mɔwīl*). Le pluriel *mīl*, donne le son *ī* long. Tous les classificateurs étant toujours de ton bas, et le radical du mot étant ici de ton haut, le substantif prend le ton ascendant.
- 13—*ɛlɛndal*, adjectif numéral *-lɛndal*, "six," accordé avec la classe de *mīl*.
- 14—*'sabon*, verbe *osabon* (.,.), "payer" à l'infinitif.
- 15—*yi*, adjectif démonstratif accordé avec la classe du mot *mīl*.
- 16—*natomb*, verbe *otomb* (.,), "passer" au passé proche avec l'indicateur *na* (.,).
- 17—*nakan*, verbe *wakan* (↑.), "aller" au passé proche avec le classificateur contracté: *n(a)akan* = *nakan*.
- 18—*obat* (.,) "demander", verbe à l'infinitif.
- 19—*naka*, représente deux particules verbales, séparables du verbe: 1°) *na* (.), indicateur du passé proche;—2°) *ka* (.), de ton moyen, indique un mouvement d'éloignement (ici dans le temps).

Les particules *nda* (n° 4) et *ka* jouent le rôle de verbes auxiliaires, "venir" et "aller".

20—*many*, adverbe.

21—*konda*, verbe *okond* (.,) "ajouter", au passé proche avec l'indicateur *na* (.) (dans *naka*), séparé par l'adverbe.—Ce verbe fait partie d'une série qui, dans les temps autres que le présent de l'indicatif, se termine par une voyelle. Nous ne pouvons expliquer la construction de cette série de verbes.<sup>1</sup>

22—*twɔy*, de la classe *hɛ-*, *hi-*, plur. *to-*, *tu-* (sing. *hiɔy*).

<sup>1</sup> Les verbes *banɲ* se divisent en *verbes instantanés*, en *verbes duratifs* et en cette troisième catégorie, dont nous n'avons pas pu déterminer la valeur.

Dans la conjugaison des verbes instantanés, le verbe reste semblable à lui-même dans tous les modes et à tous les temps (sauf un); seuls changent les indicateurs de temps et les tons.

La conjugaison des verbes duratifs prend la désinence de la forme progressive aux temps autres que le présent de l'indicatif et seulement à l'affirmation: cela est logique.

Dans la 3<sup>e</sup> catégorie de verbes, à laquelle nous faisons allusion ici, une désinence spéciale apparaît aux temps passés de l'indicatif, à l'impératif et au subjonctif. Cette désinence est une voyelle: *ɔ*, *a* ou *ə*, en accord phonétique avec le radical. Dans cette série se groupent beaucoup de *verbes d'état*,—mais non pas tous; et nous y rencontrons aussi toute une série de verbes transitifs actifs. Cette complexité ne nous pas pas laissée entrevoir quelle est l'idée ou l'image directrice de cette conjugaison spéciale.

Dans notre fable se trouvent trois de ces verbes: deux verbes d'état: *oliy* et *ubuk*, et un verbe transitif actif: *okond*.



- 23—*naho*, verbe *oho* (.) “finir”, “achever”, au passé proche avec l'indicateur *na* (').
- 24—*tofandɛ*, adjectif numéral *-fandɛ* (.) “deux”, accordé avec la classe du mot *twɔŋ*.
- 25—*naliŋ'*, pour *naliŋə*, verbe *oliŋ* (.) “se fâcher”, “être en colère”, au passé proche avec *na* ('). La voyelle finale du passé (même série que le verbe *okond*) a disparu devant la voyelle initiale du mot suivant. Nous avons affaire ici à un verbe d'état.
- 26—*isim* (.), adverbe “tres”, “beaucoup”.
- 27—*hikoko* (.), plur. *tukoko*.
- 28—*bat*, verbe *obat* (.) “ramasser” (comparer avec le ton du n° 18). Au passé proche avec l'indicateur *na* ('), séparé par le complément d'objet.
- 29—*nasub<sup>w</sup>ək*, verbe *usub* (.) “frapper”, “battre”, au passé proche avec l'indicateur *na* (') et la désinence-suffixe *ək* de la forme progressive, car le caméléon frappa pendant longtemps.
- 30—*a*, pronom personnel sujet de la 3<sup>e</sup> pers. du sing. Il est ici de ton ascendant, car il est la contraction de la particule *a* (↑), qui introduit les propositions subordonnées circonstancielles (voir n° 73) et du pronom personnel lui-même, qui prend le ton et joue aussi le rôle de la particule disparue dans la contraction.
- 31—*na*, indicateur du passé proche séparé du verbe. Il est ici de ton moyen, car la proposition est une subordonnée circonstancielle introduite par *a* (↑).
- 32—*biəmunək*, plur. de *yəmunək* (n° 1).
- 33—*bikim*, adjectif *-kim* (.), accordé avec le mot *biəmunək*.
- 34—*eliakɛn*, verbe *owɛlɛn* (.) “appeler”, au passé proche avec *na*, séparé par le complément d'objet et la désinence (ici infixé) *ak* de la forme progressive, car il fallut longtemps pour appeler tous les caméléons.
- A noter à propos de ce verbe que le radical monosyllabique en est perdu et qu'il est toujours suivi de la désinence *en* de la forme locative, car un appel est toujours localisé sur une personne ou un motif.
- 35—*ba*, pronom personnel du pluriel, accordé avec le mot *biəmunək*.
- 36—*nundu*, verbe *wundu* (↑), “remplir” (intrans.), “être plein.” Forme stativale de *wund* (↑), “toucher le fond d'un trou”. Au passé proche avec *na* (') élidé : *n(a)undu* = *nundu*.
- 37—*wai*, pronom personnel de la 3<sup>e</sup> pers. du sing., précédé de la particule du génitif accordée avec la classe du mot *ombel*. Par cette combinaison, il joue le rôle d'un adjectif possessif.
- 38—*ombel* (.), de la classe *mo-*, *mu-*, *o-*, *u-*, plur. *me-*, *mi-*, *e-*, *i-* (plur. *embel*). Ce mot a un 2<sup>e</sup> pluriel : *mambel*, exprimant la pluralité des espèces : plusieurs espèces de *embel* = *mambel*.
- 39—*bab*, pronom personnel complément de la 3<sup>e</sup> pers. du pluriel, pour les personnes.
- 40—*len*, verbe *olen* (.) , forme applicative de *ola* (.) “dire”, au passé proche avec *na* séparé du verbe.
- 41—*se*, conjonction “que”.
- 42—*ka* (.), indicateur du passé ancien, séparable du verbe.
- 43—*bwami*, pronom personnel de la 1<sup>ère</sup> pers. du sing. *amɛ*, précédé de la particule du génitif *bo-*, *bu-*, accordée avec la classe du mot *bohin*, ce qui nous donne l'équivalent d'un adjectif possessif.
- 44—*bohin* (.), de la classe *bo-*, *bu-*, plur. *ma-*, *m<sup>w</sup>ə-* (plur. *m<sup>w</sup>əhin*).
- 45—*niak*, verbe *onɛ* (.) , au passé ancien avec l'indicateur *ka* séparé par le complément d'objet, et la désinence-suffixe *ak* des verbes duratifs (devant la voyelle *a*, la voyelle *ɛ* se prononce *i*).

- 46—*me*, pronom personnel sujet de la 1ère pers. du sing.
- 47—*bak*, verbe *oba* (.), “être”, à l’aoriste (présent indéfini) de l’indicatif, employé toujours, dans la conjugaison du verbe “être”, pour le présent actuel.
- 48—*nyəkato*, adjectif verbal dérivé du verbe *unuy* (.), “maigrir”. La désinence *ək* des verbes duratifs est suivie du suffixe *ato*. Ces adjectifs verbaux sont exactement les équivalents des participes passés français employés comme adjectifs.
- 49—*nowə*, verbe *uwə* (.), “mourir”, avec l’indicateur du futur précis et déterminé *yo*.
- 50—*mb’*, pour *mba*, conjonction “mais”, élidée devant une autre voyelle.
- 51—*yo*, indicateur du futur précis et déterminé, séparable du verbe.
- 52—*niak*, verbe *one* (.) (voir n° 45), au futur avec *yo* (n° 51).
- 53—*ndusi*, verbe *usi* (.), “vouloir”, “chercher”, au présent actuel avec l’indicateur de temps *ndo*.
- 54—*bulilə* (.), adverbe.
- 55—*esombalə* (.), de la classe *e-*, *i-*, *y-*, plur. *be- bi-* (plur. *besombalə*.)
- 56—*b<sup>w</sup>əsu* (.), pronom personnel complément de la 1ère pers. du plur., employé ici comme sujet.
- 57—*b<sup>w</sup>əkim*, adjectif *-kim* (.), accordé avec la classe des personnes. Devant la voyelle *i*, le son *a* est plus près de *ə*.
- 58—*mond* (.), de la classe *mo-*, *mu-*, plur. *ba-*, de la classe des personnes.
- 59—*le*, adverbe de négation pour l’aoriste ou présent indéfini.
- 60—*tikən*, verbe *otikən* (.), “rester”, à l’aoriste, car la proposition est une subordonnée consécutive, par rapport à la suivante qui exprime l’action à accomplir.
- 61—*tu*, pronom personnel sujet de la 1ère pers. du pluriel.
- 62—*yokasukunuək*, verbe *usukunu* (.), forme stativale de *usukun* (.), “renverser”, “verser”, elle-même forme intensive de *usuk* (.), “secouer”. Ce verbe se décompose ainsi : 1° *yo*, indicateur du futur précis et déterminé ; —2° *ka*, particule verbale de mouvement d’éloignement (n° 19) ; —3° *sukunu*, verbe “être versé, renversé” ; —4° *ək*, désinence de la forme progressive, car les caméléons iront se déverser très nombreux dans la cour du léopard.
- 63—*ba*, pronom personnel sujet de la 3° pers. du pluriel.
- 64—*nakak*, verbe *wakan* (↑.), au passé proche avec l’indicateur *na* contracté et la désinence *ək* des verbes duratifs. A remarquer que cette désinence s’accroche immédiatement au radical et remplace la désinence *an* (probablement de l’intensif), sans laquelle le radical monosyllabique *n’* est pas employé.
- 65—*n’*, pour *na*, indicateur du passé proche, élidé devant une voyelle.
- 66—*wo*, particule du génitif, accordée avec la classe du mot *ombel*.
- 67—*undusi*, verbe *wundusi* (↑.), “remplir” (transitif), forme causative de *wundu* (↑.), “remplir” (intrans.). Au passé proche, avec *n’* (n° 65).
- 68—*nayayən*, verbe *oyayən* (.), au passé proche avec *na* (.).
- 69—*bamote*, adjectif numéral *-mote*, “un”, avec le classificateur du pluriel de la classe des personnes : “les uns” ou “ils uns”, ce qui équivaut ici au pronom indéfini “quelques-uns”.
- 70—*nabukə*, verbe *ubuk* (.) “être en excédent”, “dépasser la mesure”. Au passé proche, avec *na* (.). Ce verbe est



également de la série à voyelle dans les temps autres que le présent de l'indicatif. Nous avons affaire ici à un verbe d'état.

71—*enən*, préposition “ sans ”.

72—*bitwəninin* ( . . . ) substantif dérivé du verbe *utwən* ( . . ), “ être assis ”. La désinence *in* de la forme locative est suivie de la deuxième désinence *in* de la forme répétitive : “ une chose pour y être assis toujours ” = un siège. Les substantifs dérivées de verbes désignant des “ instruments ” sont formés généralement avec le classificateur *i* (plur. *bi*). Ce sont de vrais mots génériques, car ils désignent l'instrument en général, sans le désigner en particulier.

73—*a* ( ↑ ), particule qui introduit une proposition subordonnée circonstancielle. En français, nous commencerions ce genre de proposition par les conjonctions “ quand ” ou “ lorsque ”.

74—*nahonyo*, verbe *ohonyo* ( . . ), forme stativale de *ohony* ( . . ), “ éveiller ”. Au passé proche avec *na* qui a ici le ton moyen des propositions subordonnées circonstancielle, introduites par *a* ( ↑ ).

75—*nək*, verbe *wək* ( ↑ ), “ entendre ”, au passé proche avec l'indicateur de temps *na* élidé : *n(a)ək* = *nək*.

76—*ndohə*, verbe *ohə* ( . ) “ parler ”, au présent actuel, avec l'indicateur de temps *ndo*.

77—*mweɛɛɛ*, adverbe dérivé de l'adjectif qualificatif *-ɛɛɛɛ*, “ grand ”, avec le préfixe invariable *mu* des adverbes.

78—*si* <sup>^</sup> *a* ( ↑ ), conjonction *sɛ*, “ que ”, dont la voyelle *ɛ* se prononce *i* devant une autre voyelle. Le ton est ici ascendant, car du ton bas de *sɛ*, la voix passe au ton haut de *a* ( . ), pronom personnel de la 3<sup>e</sup> pers. du sing., — ton haut ici, parce que le pronom

est sujet d'un verbe au mode subjonctif.

79—*mʷəs* ( ↑ ), de la classe *ne-*, *ni-*, plur. *ma-*, *mʷə-* (sing. *nɪs*).

80—*fəmi*, verbe *ofəmi* ( . . ), “ sortir ” (transit.), “ faire sortir ”, forme causative de *ofam* ( . ), “ sortir ” (intrans.). Au subjonctif pour exprimer une intention (le subjonctif n'a pas d'indicateur de temps).

81—*bəɲ*, verbe *obəɲ* ( . ), “ voir, apercevoir, trouver ”, au passé proche avec *na* ( . ) séparé du verbe par le complément d'objet.

82—*biɲ*, adjectif qualificatif *-ɲ*, accordé avec le mot *bɪmunək*. Il est répété pour exprimer un superlatif.

83—*wow*’, pour *wowo*, élide devant une autre voyelle. Pronom démonstratif de la classe des personnes, le caméléon étant personnifié.

84—*nab*’, pour *naba*, verbe *oba* ( . ), “ être ”, élide devant une voyelle. Au passé proche avec *na*, qui a ici le ton moyen des propositions relatives : “ celui qui était . . . ”

85—*ndo*, indicateur du temps présent, séparable du verbe.

86—*wɛi*, pronom personnel complément de la 3<sup>e</sup> pers. du sing., pour la classe des personnes.

87—*kal*, verbe *okal* ( . ), “ discuter, palabrer, se défendre à la palabre ”, au mode continuatif : *a nab’ a ndo . . . kal* = il était il fait palabre, c'est-à-dire, en reprenant la phrase au début : “ celui qui lui faisait toujours palabre . . . ” (pour obtenir la restitution de ses mesures de sel).

88—*nəhəl*, verbe *ohə* ( . ), “ parler ”, au passé proche avec *na* ( . ), prononcé ici *no* par euphonie. Avec la désinence-suffixe *-l* de la forme diminutive, signifiant “ un peu ” ou “ une fois. ”

- 89—*fam*, verbe *ofam* (.), à l'impératif, 2° pers. du sing.
- 90—*endo*, verbe *wendo* (.) “donner”. Verbe défectif, qui ne peut pas s'employer au présent de l'indicatif, ni à la négation dans aucun temps. Il n'a, d'autre part, pas de formes dérivées. —A l'impératif, 2° pers. du sing.
- 91—*biami*, pronom personnel de la 1ère pers. du sing. *ame*, précédé de la particule du génitif *bi* accordée avec le mot *beseke*, ce qui nous donne l'équivalent d'un adjectif possessif.
- 92—*ayg'*, pour *aygo*, élide devant une autre voyelle. Pronom personnel de très légère emphase de la 2° pers. du sing. (à ne pas confondre avec *ayo*, pronom pers. complément).
- 93—*a bak*, “il est”, le verbe *oba* (.) “être” étant auxiliaire, dans une forme impersonnelle et invariable du mode d'habitude (voir n° 96).
- 94—*o*, pronom personnel sujet de la 2° pers. du sing.
- 95—*menyam* (.), substantif invariable au singulier et au pluriel. A remarquer, (comme au n° 3) que le classificateur est de nouveau la forme du pluriel de la classe *mo-*, *mü-*, plur. *me-*, *mi-*.
- 96—*hikəki*, verbe *ohiki* (.), avec la désinence-infixe *kə* de la forme progressive, pour exprimer un intensif : “aimer beaucoup.” Ce verbe est exprimé au mode d'habitude, avec l'auxiliaire “être” (n° 93) : *a bak o hikəki* = “il est tu aimes beaucoup.” Remarquons encore qu'au mode d'habitude, le verbe est exprimé à l'aoriste, ou présent indéfini (qui a le ton bas) : ce temps est logique, puisque l'image évoquée se place dans un moment indéfini, qui est habituel, c'est-à-dire toujours présent, mais jamais actuel.
- 97—*son*, verbe *osa* (.), “venir”, à l'impératif, 2° pers. du sing.
- 98—*niak*, verbe *one* (.), “manger”, à l'impératif, 2° pers. du sing. (voir n° 45).
- 99—*nabal*, verbe *obal* (.), “commencer”, au passé proche avec *na* (.).
- 100—*okolom* (.), verbe à l'infinitif.
- 101—*ase*, nous ne pouvons analyser cette particule, et notre embarras ne nous permettant pas de la décomposer pour en comprendre l'étymologie, nous empêche aussi de définir le temps de verbe qu'elle introduit. Elle paraît régir futur immédiat, pour une action que l'on se propose d'accomplir tout de suite ; mais, en pratique, dans une étude générale des verbes banen, il est à remarquer que le pronom personnel qui suit et le verbe revêtent la forme et le ton du subjonctif : cela d'une façon tout à fait absolue et constante.
- D'après nos définitions françaises des modes indicatif et subjonctif, nous croyons que, malgré le ton et la forme du subjonctif qui apparaissent après la particule *etase*, nous avons affaire à un futur immédiat de l'indicatif. Car malgré l'intention, le désir qu'expriment le ton du verbe, l'idée réelle de ce temps ne “subordonne pas l'action à une autre” et n'est pas “douteuse”, comme le veut le subjonctif. Psychologiquement d'ailleurs, une intention, un désir se placent dans le futur, aussi immédiat soit-il. La langue banen étant éminemment “descriptive” et “instinctive”, disons simplement ici que l'intention exprimée doit s'accomplir dans un futur immédiat, presque instantané, et sans aucun doute : il est si rapide qu'en français nous le traduirions par le présent. “Je te donne tout de suite tes mesures de sel.”
- 102—*bia*, adjectif possessif de la 2° pers, accordé avec le mot *beseke*.



103—*endo*, verbe *wendo* (. .), séparé du pronom personnel par le complément d'objet. Pour l'explication du temps de ce verbe, voir le n° 101.

104—*nahian*, verbe *ohian* (. .) "revenir", au passé proche avec l'indicateur de temps *na*, qui a ici le ton moyen des propositions subordonnées circonstancielles introduites par *a* (↑).

105—*mim* (↑), plur. *m<sup>wəb</sup>*.

Nous avons à introduire ici deux remarques importantes, que nous tirons de notre étude générale des classes de mots de la langue banen :

1°) nous pensons qu'en réalité nous nous trouvons là en présence d'un mot faisant partie de toute une série qui ne possède pas de forme du singulier : nous devons rattacher les classificateurs *e-*, *i-*, aux pluriels de la classe dont les classificateurs du singulier sont *o-*, *u-* ; et nous assimilons le pluriel *ma-* à la forme du 2° pluriel *ma-* de cette même classe. Nous en avons rencontré un exemple avec le mot *ombel* (voir n° 38).

(Nous avons déjà fait allusion à cette absence de classificateur du singulier à propos des mots invariables : voir n° 3 et n° 95).

2°) le pluriel *m<sup>wəb</sup>* est de formation frappante. Le classificateur étant *m<sup>wəb-</sup>*, la consonne *m* du radical se change en *b*. Nous ne sommes pas là devant un fait exceptionnel : il existe plusieurs séries de mots, en banen, dont les alternances sont tout à fait différentes des formes normales et qui entraînent l'altération de la consonne du radical. L'alternance *m < b* se retrouve dans plusieurs substantifs.

Disons encore que ces alternances de consonnes ne portent pas (sauf

dans le mot *m<sup>wəb</sup>*) sur des finales et que nous ne nous trouvons pas là en présence d'influences soudanaises dont les pluriels agissent en suffixes.

106—*kondonak*, verbe *okondon* (. . .), "enlever, soustraire". Forme réversive de *okond*, "ajouter" (n° 21).—Au passé proche avec l'indicateur de temps *na* (dans *naka*) séparé du verbe par le complément d'objet ; et la désinence-suffixe *ak* de la forme progressive, car le léopard eut à se dessaisir de plusieurs mesures de sel.

107—*nahienəki*, verbe *ohieni* (. .), "faire revenir = rendre, restituer", forme causative de *ohian* (. .), "revenir". Au passé proche avec *na* (.) et la désinence-infixe *ək* du progressif, car les mesures de sel à restituer sont nombreuses et représentent un sujet collectif.

108—*si<sup>a</sup>*, pour *se*, conjonction "que", la voyelle *ε* se prononçant *i* devant la voyelle-liaison de l'arrêt glottal.

109—*engel* (. .), plur. *ma<sup>ngel</sup>*, est de la série de mots qui ne possède pas de forme régulière pour le singulier : elle utilise pour le singulier la forme du pluriel *e-* des mots dont le singulier est *o-* (voir le n° 38 ; relire aussi le n° 105) ; et le pluriel en *ma-* est celui de la pluralité des espèces.

110—*bwe<sup>ne</sup>ne* (↑ .), de la classe *bo-*, *bu-*, plur. *ma-* (plur. *me<sup>ne</sup>ne*, contraction de *m(a)ene<sup>ne</sup>* = *me<sup>ne</sup>ne*).—De la classe des mots abstraits, ce substantif est dérivé de l'adjectif qualificatif *-ene<sup>ne</sup>* (. .), "grand".

111—*yayen*, verbe *oyayen* (. . .) "dépasser", "surpasser", "vaincre". Au passé proche avec l'indicateur de temps *na* (.), séparé du verbe par le complément d'objet.

# THE UNIFICATION OF BANTU LANGUAGES

E. WESTPHAL

This stimulating pamphlet<sup>1</sup> together with Dr. Nhlapo's earlier one *Bantu Babel* states the case for unification of Bantu languages. It is to be hoped that it will not suffer the same fate that has befallen the work of men like A. N. Tucker, G. P. Lestrade, C. M. Doke and C. Meinhof. Tucker's important work in *The Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana group of Bantu Languages* (Longmans 1929) has, as far as I know been completely ignored by any of the bodies concerned with Sotho. One hopes, however, that now an African has expressed his opinion on unification the movement will gain force.

It is a pity that Dr. Nhlapo does not express an opinion on how the unification can be brought about and one misses a note of appreciation for the work done by the men who have been occupied with Bantu literature and speech. Professor Lestrade says in his article *Some reflections on the Future of the South African Bantu languages* (*The Critic*, Vol. III, 3): "Balance of speakers, quantity and quality of literature, vested interests and tradition make the task of determining upon a Bantu *lingua franca* for the Union virtually an impossible one." No doubt one obstacle is the fact that missions, who are often the only publishers of books in certain dialects, will suffer if a new orthography is introduced and all their present stocks become valueless. But a Government grant could be made to publishers when changing the orthography. This would overcome a good deal of opposition that must, naturally, come where vested interests are concerned. The missions have been in the past perhaps the only bodies concerned with Bantu literature. One need only think of the Paris Mission in Basutoland, The Berlin Mission in the Transvaal and the Dutch Reformed Missions in Southern Rhodesia and in Nyasaland to realize that their work must not be stopped before the state is

ready to take over Native education in all its aspects.

In this new pamphlet Dr. Nhlapo deals with the unification of existing orthographies and grammatical analyses and he also touches on (but does not distinguish from these) the unification of grammar and vocabulary.

While I believe that a common orthography and common analyses are a way to solve many of the literary and educational problems, I do not believe that any attempts at unifying grammar (as spoken) and vocabulary will do anything but hinder the unification that may come. I think that Dr. Nhlapo has not made this distinction clearly enough. He does, of course, use the word "encourage" in reference to such unifications.

The orthographical unification of the Shona dialects of Southern Rhodesia, which was suggested by Professor C. M. Doke and adopted by the Rhodesian Government, is an example of how a common orthography can bring about unification (although, admittedly, it is not yet complete owing to the factors of time and illiteracy. In addition to the standard orthography, an attempt has been made by Rev. A. Louw of Morgenster to find a common vocabulary and grammar for use in the new translation of the Shona Bible. The manuscript examples of this translation were sent to various parts of Southern Rhodesia and have been on the whole, well understood. Thus the position is that, while leaving freedom of speech to those who claim it, a standard Shona may also be provided. If the unification proceeds as desired a standard Shona may be the result, while local dialects may still be used—as is the position in European countries.

While I agree with Dr. Nhlapo's "basic principles" listed on page 4, there are some that need clarification: Firstly, he suggests that "the same symbols or combinations of symbols must as far as possible represent the same sounds in all the Bantu languages" (No. 8 page 5). I believe that

<sup>1</sup> *Nguni and Sotho* by J. M. Nhlapo (The African Bookman, P.O. Box 3115, Cape Town, 1945, 1s.)



this will only give rise to new confusion. The sound represented by -f- in Pedi is pronounced with both lips whereas that of Southern Sotho is labio-dental with the lower lip against the upper teeth. According to Dr. Nhlapo's principle we should, therefore, write two different symbols. This should apply not only between the Sotho dialects but also as far as unifications of Sotho and Nguni are concerned. It is clear therefore that phonetic principles cannot alone solve the problem. Historical considerations (as stated by Meinhof) must be the first to be applied in looking for a common orthography. Where these fail phonetic principles may be applied. We find, for instance that, Southern Sotho -f- is derived from Bantu -p- and the same origin applies to the Pedi bilabial -f- (which is written -fh- in Venda). Thus, as far as this sound is concerned in the three languages an -f- could represent them all in a common orthography. A new symbol will then have to be found for the Venda labio-dental -f-. Again, we find that Venda -vh-, Pedi -b- (pronounced bilabially as the -vh-), Sotho -b- and Zulu -b- are all derived from a bilabial fricative, according to Meinhof. Thus we could agree on the symbol -b- for all these languages for this sound which Meinhof represents by -v-. A new symbol must then be provided for Zulu -b- which was formerly written as -bh-, and a new one must be provided for Venda -b- (we could choose -bh- or -b-, as long as it is consistent with the symbol agreed upon for other languages coming into the unification). Thus, if we see the word *bila* (boil) we will, as Zulu speakers, say -*bila*, as BaSotho -*bila* present orthography: -*bela*), as BaPedi -*bila* with bilabial fricative (present orthography: -*bela*), etc.

This principle is, however, not always applicable and in such cases phonetic considerations will have to determine the symbol.

Secondly, I agree that phonetic symbols and diacritics should be avoided as much as possible (principle No. 4) but I think Dr. Nhlapo should add that our new orthography must not be restricted to the twenty-four inadequate symbols of the Roman alphabet. New Morse symbols and new type can always be constructed when there is

a general and national need for them. Of course, Dr. Nhlapo has good reason to fear that new symbols might hamper African literature.

He further suggests that a five vowel system be adopted for Sotho i.e., a, i, u, e and o. But this is not possible as Sotho uses a nine vowel system, seven of which are in phonological contrast (the remaining two contrasting in a few unimportant words only.) He suggests, for instance, that the word "Sotho" be written *Suthu*, and *tsela* be written *tsila*. (This is an important suggestion). But what has been written as -i- (for instance in *bitsa*) and as -u- (for instance in *bula*) must then receive a new symbol as it is in phonological contrast in a number of words for instance *bitsa* (call) and *betsa* (throw—which in Dr. Nhlapo's orthography will both be written *bitsa*), *mula* (beat) and *mola* (line—which will be written as *mula*), *hula* (draw) and *hola* (grow—which will be written *hula*). Thus there will be no distinction between *bitsa* (call) and *bitsa* (throw). We therefore suggest a new symbol for the present -i- which in the new orthography will represent one of the present -e's-. Here a diacritic will be useful especially since it avoids creating a new symbol viz. -î- with a circumflex as used in Afrikaans. Thus *bitsa*, *bûla*, *mûla*. This is necessary because Zulu, Venda and Shangaan do not distinguish between these vowels; or, if you like, the vowel -i- in these languages has two derivations—one from -î- and one from -i- (cf. C. Meinhof's *Phonology*).

Finally, on page 8, Dr. Nhlapo states that he does not wish to decide whether to suggest a conjunctive or a disjunctive writing. Yet on page 10 he seems to agree that Bantu languages are agglutinative. (He is, I presume, using the word in the German sense or as used by Professor A. Werner in her *Language Families of Africa*, and means what Professor Doke refers to as "inflexional"). He should, in this case, have no doubts about the orthography since, if they are inflexional, the only reasonable orthography must join all the formatives to the stem of whatever part of speech is concerned.

This conjunctive writing will simplify grammatical analysis tremendously and this will be of

advantage to all those studying the language. It will be of even greater advantage in the study of a number of Bantu dialects for, as may be seen from Professor Doke's works such widely separated languages as Lamba (Northern Rhodesia) and Zulu fit into this same grammatical scheme. Dr. Nhlapo suggests nine parts of speech. If he means these to represent the major parts of speech he is unnecessarily complicating Bantu grammar. Professor Doke has only six. If, on the other hand, he intends these to be the morphological or subordinate parts of speech, his list is inadequate as for instance predicative forms such as *kimuthu* (present orthography: *ke motho*) meaning "it is a person" contain no verb.

Finally, I must refer to the specimen texts at the end of Dr. Nhlapo's booklet. The problems associated with unification of vocabulary and grammar (as opposed to grammatical analysis)

are obvious in his "Sotho (unified)" page 15: He uses the verb *senetsa* (par 1) and *misebetsi* (par 2) but also forms the derivatives *tiro* (par 1) and *tirelo* (par 3) from the Pedi verb *dira* which has the same meaning as Southern Sotho *sebetsa*. These derivations may or may not be a good thing but I think that the new unified languages (if there are to be any) must be as simple as possible. Such a unified language would, of course, be mainly used in Government notices and documents and in works of national importance. Where this is not necessary, however, let the Sotho and Nguni speaking people decide what they want. And let them be assisted in deciding by a common orthography whose construction Dr. Nhlapo has here shown as have Dr. Tucker and Professor Doke elsewhere, to be entirely possible. He has suggested some symbols which should greatly help us in this work of national importance.

---

## NSAANGU'S HEAD

By M. D. W. JEFFREYS

The tribes covered by this article lie mostly in the mandated territory of the French Cameroons but cross the Anglo-French frontier into the northern part of the mandated territory of the British Cameroons. The headwaters of the Benue and of the Sanaga rivers have their origins in this terrain.

Some two hundred and fifty years ago there was a large Tikar or Ndwöbö migration southwards. The Natives assign famine, population pressure, and civil war for the kingship, as the cause of this migration. Part of these migrants, the Bamum, are to-day settled in the French Cameroons with Fumban as their capital and another part, the Bansa with Kimbs as their capital, in the British Cameroons, contiguous with the Bamum.

The following incidents connected with the skulls of two of the Bamum kings are presented as having some historical interest, more especially, because for the first time translations from the Bamum Sultan, Njoya's, history of the Bamum are given. It was this Sultan who invented in about 1900 his own script and then wrote the History and Customs of his people.

King's skulls are the pivot round which locally the installation of a new king centres.

Since the Bamum first became a group, independent of their parent stock, the Rifum of Ndwöbö, there have been sixteen chiefs up to, and including, Njoya.

Though the skulls of all these chiefs are to-day in Bamum territory yet the bodies of two of their chiefs are missing. Nshare, the first Bamum chief, lost his life in Rifum whither he had gone to collect his possessions. His principal attendant, with the rank and title of Njimonshare, managed to cut off Nshare's head and bring it safely back to Fumban.<sup>1</sup>

The next Bamum chief to lose his head was Saangu the father of an illustrious ruler of the Bamums, namely Njoya. Saangu was killed in battle and

his head cut off by his foes, the Bansa. The cult of the skull forms an important part of Bamum culture. The loss therefore to the Bamum of Saangu's head was a very serious matter and the cause of much complaining to Njoya. It is thought, therefore, that an account of the events that lead to this disastrous battle, the description of Saangu's death and the account of the recovery of his head would be of some interest.

The information in this article is based upon oral tradition; eye witnesses accounts; Njoya's *History of the Bamum*; the Bansa tradition; and the report of the German Officer who recovered Saangu's skull and handed it back to Njoya.

The following account is condensed from chapter 15 of Njoya's *History of the Bamum*. A slave, Dguwo, had usurped the Bamum throne and to stabilize his position started to kill off the males of the ruling family. One of these males, Saangu escaping this slaughter, led a successful insurrection. Dguwo was slain and Saangu installed as chief. However, there was plotting against him by some of his half-brothers. So he decided to lead the Bamum to battle to see if a successful war would not make him a popular ruler and so defeat the machinations of his half-brothers.

An occasion for war on the neighbouring tribe, who had the same origin as that of the Bamum, soon arose over the killing, by some Bamum, of a runaway wife of the Bansa chief. The Bansa in retaliation attacked and dispersed a Bamum settlement at Fukkam (Mbokkam in Bansa).

Saangu now prepared his army against the Bansa. The Bamum army advanced by way of Dgoran (Mantum in Bansa) and the main battle was fought near Tabessob, in Bansa territory.

I now quote Njoya's history. "So Saangu started a war against the Bansa. The campaign lasted only a short time before civil war broke out and the Bamum started to kill each other. Many heralds fell. Then Mwofon Melighm drew off



to one side with his followers and announced that he was going to be the next king. Muafonjikam likewise, drew off and proclaimed himself king. On account of this disruption they all perished there. The Bansa looked on with astonishment and cheered. . . . Great numbers of the Bamum perished in this war, at least 1500 Bamum fell."<sup>2</sup>

In the History there is a detailed account of the death of Saangu and Mfopu, the Bamum who translated the account for me, was so affected by it that he wept while translating: "In the second onslaught . . . the Bansa made a flank attack on Njimwofon Njikam, while another Bansa army vigorously attacked Mwofon Melighm, and penetrated to where king Saangu was standing, who seizing a rifle fought fiercely. . . . Presently the Bansa forced their way till they faced the king. His followers urged him to withdraw a little and leave the fighting to them while he watched. He refused saying he would not run from a foreigner. Presently he called to ten brave men and said 'To-day we die as died the king of Bali Kumbat'. The king calling up Ndiamej, gave him the title of *Nna Njua* and he replied, '*Parrim*' (Thunderer). The king said, 'To-day we shall die like flies'. Mbwopaj replied. 'Those whom you need in battle, those who fight to the last, to-day you will see them'. And he, with Dkangkandum, drove back the Bansa and on their coming back to the late king they found that many of the king's heralds had fallen. As they again advanced to the attack with the late king, he started singing. The first was the song of the leopard, then followed the song of the Mekway. Thus, these few advanced on the enemy and drawing their matchet slashed the Bansa in hand to hand fighting. On trying to get back most of the heralds were killed, only a few were left. The Bansa now attacked in strength.

"Dkangkandum, with Mbwoghraringam, taking a bunch of spears hurled them until he had no more and had to beg more from others. He now started to sing the Nshoro war song but had to sing the chorus as well. At this stage there were but seven men left with the late king who advanced with these seven. When he had hurled his last spear he drew his matchet and attacked but a

Bansa thrust a spear through his left chest and Saangu fell backwards leaning against a tree. The Bansa now dashed up and decapitated him. Some of the Bansa elders now arrived on the scene and recognizing it as the head of the king they said that had the others known, it would have been well not to have decapitated him. They said 'Is it customary to kill a king in battle?' Word was sent to the Bansa king who when he heard, wept bitterly saying that the Bamum king and he were brothers from Rifum. He sent a cloth in which the body was brought to Bansa and buried there, and the Bansa king executed the man who had speared the late king saying 'Why have you killed my 'brother?'"<sup>3</sup>

This picturesque account differs a good deal from that of the Bansa. Thus, the old village head of Kisha told me "I took part in the last Bansa-Bamum war. I killed my man, cut off his head and gave it to our Fon who rewarded me. The war arose when our Fon, Taminjo died. His women fled to the Fon of Bamum. Heralds were sent to the Bamum chief to return these women. All the heralds were killed. So Simbum, Taminjo's successor, attacked the Bamum and we killed their chief Saangu."

The village-head of Tabessob, a vassal village of Bansa, said that it was under their village-head, Shan, that they assisted the Bansa against the Bamum. The fight took place at Nsom, the name of the valley between the present Jakiri on the Bansa-Bamenda Road. Nsaangu, the Bamum chief, was killed by Bukap, a Tabessob man.

In none of these account is there any mention that the Fon of Bansa put to death the slayer of Nsaangu. Concerning the fate of Nsaangu's head there are several versions, thus the following information was given to me by the V. Head of Ngorin, Mbiame. "When Nsaangu's head, was brought to Simbum, he sent Gwanka with six others to take back Nsaangu's head to Fumban. They arrived safely at Fumban and handed over the head.

"On the way back they were ambushed by the Bamum at Mbokkam and all were slain. As a consequence the Bansa drove the Bamum away

from Mbokkam. Mbokkam was uninhabited land when the Nso travelled up the Mbui river on their migration from Rifum. After they had founded Kofum the Bamums occupied Mbokkam."

The Banso deny that they ever returned Nsaangu's head.

After the head of the Bamum king, Nsaangu, had been brought to the king of Banso, the latter sent two emissaries to make peace with the Bamum and to arrange for the restoration of Nsaangu's head. These two men, on their return, were set upon by the Bamum on the banks of the Neng (Nun) and slain by having their arms cut off.

As a consequence Nsaangu's skull was returned only when the Germans forced the Banso to do so.

The Banso used the skulls of their enemies to decorate their *manong* or "war-club", houses but that when the Germans conquered them, they were ordered to get rid of all these skulls. "Some skulls" said they, "in our Mfu house were thrown into the Mbui river, while others were placed in caves."

One cave has, to this day, several hundred skulls in it.

Mr. N. C. Duncan, District Officer, Bamenda in 1921, wrote as follows. "In the Native war between Banso and Bamum, the Bansos caught and killed the king of Bamban, Njoya's father, whose skull then decorated the Fon of Banso's ancestral hall. On the arrival of the Germans at Bali and Fumban, the Bamum appealed to them to regain the head as according to Native custom, a new king cannot be crowned without the presence of his father's skull."<sup>4</sup>

This statement that Nsaangu's skull was on view in a Manjong house is denied by the Banso. That the skull (or head) of the predeceased king be present at the installation of the new king is correct. It is a vital step in the coronation ritual for the king designate to hold the head or skull of the deceased king in order to ensure the continuity of power and majesty in the new king. Details of the coronation ceremony are given in Njoya's history.

## NJOYA'S ACCOUNT

Njoya in his history is curiously reticent about the recovery of Nsaangu's skull. I quote what he wrote on this subject. "The Pamum can never forget their fathers who were lost in the Banso war and also their king and that their heads were lost to no purpose or gain. I, king Njoya, went to Banso and raised high the prestige of the Pamum among the Banso. I burnt Banso and Hauptmann Gravey gave me a medal and said that I was a resolute man and a leader of resolute men. Later on, the Kaizer sent me a medal, through the hands of Governor Erbermaier. When Governor Erbermaier gave me this medal he told me how much he liked me."<sup>5</sup>

Now Governor Erbermaier was in the Cameroons from 1912-1915 and this date shows that this particular section of Njoya's history was written after 1912, but there is no mention that Nsaangu's skull had been recovered though there is mention that it was lost in the Bamum-Banso war.

## POPULAR BAMUM ACCOUNT

There is a popular tradition in Fumban that after the Germans had called in the aid of the Bamum in their war on the Banso, Njoya having burnt Kimbo, the Banso capital, Nsaangu's skull was then and there retrieved.

The popular account as given by a Bamum runs as follows. In the burning of Banso by Njoya the head of Nsaangu was recovered by one, Ndam Banso. This man was a Bamum, but a former slave of the Banso. He had become a soldier under the Germans and, being a Banso slave, knew where Nsaangu's head was kept. He recovered a skull, declaring that it was Nsaangu's. This man became the Manshuat Paiyegh (i.e., the intermediary between the Bamum and the Europeans). He was rewarded by Njoya who raised him to the rank of Titamfon No. 3. Ndam Banso thus had the duty of shaving the king's face every Friday. These Titamfon have to be old men because they are habitually about the court and see the king's women. Such a Tita gets many presents from the Fon and is rewarded every

Friday. Though Ndam Banso is dead, his family endures to this day in Fumban.

The Bamum story that a herald, on his own, recovered the head is not true. No Bamum herald would know where the head was kept, nor which head was that of Nsaangu.

This popular Bamum account does not agree with that of the Bānsō, nor with the official German report of the recovery and delivery of Nsaangu's skull.

### THE BANSO ACCOUNT

The Bānsō account was told me by Mbinlop, a son of Fon Simbum, who was Fon of Bānsō at that time, and was present when Nsaangu's skull was handed back to the German officer.

"The Tabessob people were not Bānsō, but a fugitive group from Nsob, a Wō settlement to the east, dispersed by Fulani raids. Some of these Nsob had settled at Tabessob among the Bānsō and others at Batundun among the Bamum. Because it was a Tabessob man who had slain Nsaangu, the Fon of Bānsō conferred the high honour of a Kebaiship upon the head of the Tabessob group.

Nsaangu's head was brought to the Fon of Bānsō who had it cleaned: rubbed in camwood: wrapped up in a Wukari cloth and kept in a bag in his own private apartments. The skulls of the slain Bamum were placed as decorations in the two Manjong houses of Bānsō.

"The Fon of Bānsō now sent two heralds to Fumban with overtures of peace. He pointed out that it was wrong for brother to fight brother and that if peace could be arranged Nsaangu's skull would be returned. The heralds departed with the conventional regalia of King's messengers on a peaceful errand, namely carrying Ken leaves and the Royal spear with the tip bent downwards. They delivered their message and on their return journey had reached the banks of the Monyi river, the tribal boundary between Bānsō and Bamum. There they were set upon by Bamums who, disregarding the royal ensignia carried by these men, emasculated them by cutting off the entire pudenda and letting them go. The two men with the royal spear reached Kobi on Bānsō

land between Bangolan and Bamessi, where they died and were buried. Thereafter Fon Simbum of Bānsō kept Nsaangu's head.

"In the fighting which began in March 1906 between the Germans and the Bānsō, the Germans called in the Bamum to assist them. Kimbo, the Bānsō capital was sacked, looted and burnt, but the behaviour of the Bamums was so brutal, namely ripping open the bellies of pregnant women that after five days the Germans sent them back to Fumban.

"Simbum II, the Fon of Bānsō now fled to Nzin near Kinka in Mbiami, taking Nsaangu's skull with him. After some six months of warfare Simbum II sent seventy elephant tusks to the Germans as an overture of peace.

"One of the terms was that the skull of Nsaangu was to be delivered to the Germans who would send it to the Bamum at Fumban. Simbum II now handed the skull to Fai Nzenzepsen in whose house the German Officer was residing in Kimbo. Fai Nzenzepsen handed over the bag containing this skull wrapped up in a Wukari cloth. The skull was delivered in the morning. By the afternoon the German Officer was on his way to Fumban."

The Bamum story, by the Fumban Court officials, of its reception by Njoya agrees with the German Official account which I now give.

The German account given herewith was kindly sent in French for this article by Madame Dugast, *Secrétaire-archiviste de la Société d'Etudes Camerounais*.

### THE GERMAN ACCOUNT

"Pour exécuter les conditions de paix qui furent imposées aux Bānsō, le Lieutenant von Wenckstern fut chargé de livrer la tête du chef Bamum Nsango, qui avait été tue huit ans plus tôt dans une bataille contre les Bānsō. L'officier sus-nommé raconta, le 1<sup>er</sup> Septembre 1906, la restitution de cette tête au chef actuel NJOYA, qui pour l'instant à ses premiers contacts avec les Européens.

"En exécution des conditions de paix stipulées à Bānsō, je repris la marche vers la ville Bamum. Deux heures après mon arrivée à Batabi (qui se



trouve à petite journée de marche de Fumban) le sultan Njoya à qui j'avais envoyé par avance la nouvelle du retour du crâne, arriva à Batabi accompagné de beaucoup de ses dignitaires et d'une partie de ses soldats.

"Après des salutations cordiales, Njoya me pria de lui donner dès aujourd'hui la tête de son père. La restitution de la tête fut une scène vraiment frappante. En tout, la contre-partie du dessaisissement de la tête à Bango. Là-bas au moment où la tête fut sortie de la corbeille et des linges, une peur effrayante se peignit sur les visages de Symu et de ses gens.

"La frayeur la plus forte était exprimée par Symu lui-même. C'était à peine s'il osait regarder le crâne. Plus-tard il raconta que chaque année il sortait la tête un fois, pour la montrer à son peuple, ce qui chaque fois était l'occasion de grandes festivités.

"Ici à Batabi, on pouvait lire une grande méfiance sur les visages de Njoya et de ses dignitaires. Quand je sortis la tête de la corbeille, les gens de Njoya s'approchèrent en un cercle serré autour de Njoya et de moi-même. Sur le visage de Njoya se lisait clairement la question, Est-ce la vraie tête ?" Ce fut avec un regard particulier et expressif que Njoya regarda pendant une seconde le crâne que je lui tendais :

"Alors cet homme grand et fort éclata en sanglots comme un enfant.

"Njoya fut relevé et assis sur une chaise par ses dignitaires qui pleuraient très fort. Cela dura longtemps, jusqu'à ce qu'il se calmât un peu. Puis il me pria de lui donner la tête. Il la caressa et la pressa contre lui dans les larmes. Alors il commanda d'emballer le crâne avec les étoffes, dans une belle corbeille qu'il avait apportée. Les étoffes étaient les restes des vêtements que Sango portait sur lui pendant son expédition contre les Bango.

"Njoya resta longtemps assis en silence, regardant fixement la corbeille, puis il se retourna brusquement et me serra fortement la main en disant : 'Je te remercie mille fois de m'avoir apporté la tête de mon père. Moi et mon peuple nous n'oublierons pas ce que les Blancs ont fait, et je déclare que maintenant je vois clairement que

les Blancs me veulent du bien.' Finalement il me demanda l'autorisation de retourner à Fomban.

"Sur le chemin du retour, Njoya ne monta pas sur son cheval. Lui, ses dignitaires et ses soldats marchèrent la tête courbée derrière la corbeille dans laquelle reposait maintenant le crâne.

"Toute la scène montra l'amour du fils pour son père et l'attachement d'un peuple à son chef tombé. J'entendis dire par des Bamum qu'à partir de ce moment seulement Njoya serait vraiment considéré et obéi par beaucoup comme était le chef, maintenant qu'il était en possession de la tête de son père. On lui avait reproché souvent de ne pas avoir la tête de son père dans le pays. Cela est facile à comprendre, quand on sait que les Bamum conservent les têtes des chefs tombés. Le mort est enterré debout jusqu'au cou, et par dessus la tête est renversée une poterie. Quand la putrefaction est terminée, le crâne est enlevé et mis à l'abri dans une maison spéciale. De temps en temps, et surtout dans des occasions particulières, le successeur se rend à cette maison et y apporte aux morts le vin de palme prescrit.

"Contre son habitude qui veut qu'il aie après lui une grande suite, le lendemain Njoya vint tout seul à cheval à ma rencontre quand je fis mon entrée dans Fomban. Il me dit que son peuple était dans un grand deuil, que tout le monde s'était enduit le corps de couleur blanche et portait des vêtements sales. Le long de la route, ville, ne se voyaient que quelques personnes. Les lamentations des femmes sortaient de maisons. Fomban était en deuil de son chef Nsango tombé.

"Sur la place devant la maison du chef, nous étions attendus par une grande foule. Tout était peint en blanc. Même les soldats de Njoya qui sont toujours proprement vêtus, portaient comme les simples particuliers des vêtements sales et déchirés.

"A l'entrée de la maison, la mère du chef vint à ma rencontre et me remercia avec force larmes, pour la restitution de la tête.

"Quand Njoya m'offrit le vin de bienvenue, il harangua la foule et ses paroles succédèrent les applaudissements frénétiques des assistants. Plus

tard, un de mes soldats Bamum me raconta que le discours qu'il adressa à la foule, il exposa que le blanc lui avait rendu, à lui et à son peuple un grand service et qu'il fallsit en garder de la reconnaissance.

"Le lendemain Njoya m'apporta quantité de cadeaux et me pria de l'inviter à me rendre visite à Bamenda."<sup>6</sup>

There are some obvious mistakes in the German version which I now proceed to correct. According to the Germans, the death of Saangu occurred some eight years prior to 1906, i.e., about 1898, but Njoya in Cap. 162, Sec. 32. of his history states in 1920 that he had been king of the Bamums for twenty-five years, so that on this reckoning he would have come to the throne in 1895. However, this date seems too recent for the following reasons. Mföpu, one of Njoya's scribes who has been helping me in the translation of Njoya's history, says that at the time of Saangu's death, Njoya was only a lad and that it was not until nine years later that Njoya took Ngamliya as his first consort. At that time Mföpu's mother was *enciente* so that Mföpu was born shortly after Njoya took his first consort. When Saangu's skull was brought back to Fumban in 1906, Mföpu says he was a school boy aged about nine or ten in the Basel Mission School. In other words, Mföpu was born some nine years after Saangu's death and was about nine years old when the skull was brought to Fumban in 1906. These

figures place Saangu's death at about eighteen years earlier, i.e., about 1888.

I suggest therefore that the German statement that Saangu perished eight years prior to 1906 is a clerical error for eighteen years.

The German account says that in 1906 Njoya made his first contact with Europeans. This statement is incorrect. I give few dates.

1890. Zintgraff had reached Bali.

1899. Kamptz captured Tibati.

1901. Dominik had occupied Garua and Marua.

The local Bamum say that the first Europeans entered Fumban in 1903 and that in 1906 Rev. Goehring, Basel Mission, reached Fumban from Bali.

#### REFERENCES

1. Njoya's History, etc. Cap. I. Sec. XII. Unpublished MSS.
2. Njoya's History, Cap. 15. V. VII and VIII.
3. Njoya's History, Cap. 120. Sec. VII and VIII.
4. Duncan. N. C. Extract from the report in Bamenda File 0/3/1919. Award of Cameroons to France and handing over of British Sphere. Unpublished MSS.
5. Njoya's History etc. Unpublished MSS. Cap. 119.
6. Deutsches Kolonialblatt. 15. Mars 1907. P. 258-259.

# WHITE SETTLEMENT IN AFRICA

RALPH HORWITZ

Africa is the continent of primitive social and economic communities. With the exception of the northern littoral of the continent which for centuries has formed part of the Mediterranean civilizations, the effective penetration of Africa by European powers and peoples is scarcely a hundred years old. Again with the exception of this small part of Southern Africa, European penetration can hardly be described as European settlement. Geography, climate, tropical diseases and the lack of navigable rivers presented almost insuperable barriers to European colonization. After a busy period of scrambling for Africa, the European powers were baffled by the difficulties of the successful exploitation of the gains from all the scrambling.

The development of the African colonial empires did not follow the usual pattern. Primarily the indigenous inhabitants of Africa were almost totally unacquainted with an economy based on specialization and exchange. Trade with the African peoples could not develop like trade with India or China. For the Africans had little or nothing to exchange. In the beginning the slave trade paid big dividends but before a slowly awakening social conscience and a dawning realization of the self-frustrating character of a slave economy, the slave trade lost its significance. For a short period dreams of the great riches of the Dark Continent promoted a flood of capital investment but the actual results were disappointing. Africa in general yielded no quick returns except to the lucky few. On the whole prospects for investment in the Americas, India and the Far East were much more favourable. The modern economic history of Africa begins with the discovery of mineral wealth, especially in South Africa, and the subsequent story is the record of capital investment for the exploitation of these resources. Africa has developed as a mineral and raw materials economy.

This then is the background of European settle-

ment in Africa. Relatively small numbers of Europeans scattered over vast territories amongst far more numerous communities of Africans. Only where mineral deposits have proved extensive and of enduring significance to world economy has any considerable concentration of European population and permanence of European settlement taken place. And even then these islands of European colonisation seem to rest on a basis of ephemeral and uneasy stability. Let the price of copper tumble, let a group of men in Washington or London reject gold as the medium for international exchange and far the greater part of European settlement in Africa will crumble away. Much of European Africa can be likened to one great mining town. Around it gathers a certain ancillary activity. The illusion grows that some of this secondary agriculture and secondary industry enjoys a vital stability *sui generis* but let the mine become exhausted or no one want its product and the "town" will become derelict.

This is the measure of the failure of European settlement in Africa. Here and there its achievement may appear superficially spectacular—a busy port with its graving dock, skyscrapers from the barren veld, an oasis of "White Highlands". But in the fundamental task of diversifying the economic potentiality of the millions of Africans, practically nothing has been done. When required the necessary numbers of these Africans have been brought within the European economy to provide the motive power of unskilled labour in lieu of mechanization. And if the Europeans should depart the vast majority of these Africans will remain as unskilled as they were originally. Indeed because of this, because only a relative handful of the indigenous peoples of Africa has been provided with the knowledge and the skills vital to a modern industrial society, the Europeans may *have* to depart. Where progress has been made as in West Africa, the Belgian Congo and Uganda it is in those territories where European



settlement has been largely excluded or played a minor role.

And if one can find one common cause for the failure of European settlement, it surely is the pursuit of "white supremacy". How tragically dismaying it is that even such an elevated and imaginative mind as General Smuts should lend itself to this superficiality.

European settlement and capital investment by resident Europeans was and is an essential instrument for the progress of Africa. Any attempt to exclude European knowledge, enterprise and capital from the exploitation of Africa's mineral and raw materials must condemn the indigenous peoples of Africa to further generations of standards of living immeasurably below those of more advanced peoples. Without large-scale and continuous capital investment from extra-African sources, Africa must continue to stagnate through the centuries. Nor indeed is there any special moral justification why primitive peoples should forever deny to other peoples the use and benefits of the wealth of the lands they inhabit. Primitiveness surely does not provide an inviolable title to ownership even if it should be an unchallengeable sanction against exploitation.

In that informed and highly intelligent exchange of letters,<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Huxley eloquently states the case for the individual European settler:—

"And has the settlers' presence in Kenya really been quite so deleterious to the Africans as you believe? Let's try and look at things through their eyes for the moment. As they see it, the country has been built up largely by European effort. Of course, nothing could have been done without African labour, but the initiative, the enterprise, the direction and the capital came from the European. Not from the government, but from the settler and the trader. They were invited to come there originally by the government and the government sold them the land. The terms were easy but the land was totally unproved and therefore in itself worthless; for land has little intrinsic worth; it is only when men have

discovered what it will produce and found a market for that produce, that it acquires a value.

"So the settlers came, and found forest, bush and veld. The forest and the bush had to be cleared, the veld improved and fenced; land had to be ploughed, game driven back, water supplies discovered and harnessed, buildings erected, and Natives taught the elements of farm skill; cattle and sheep imported and bread, roads made, transport organised, everything built up from nothing.

"That was the first stage. Then came the second: a long, often heart-breaking stage. Crops that had at first done well grew poorly: unsuspected plant pests had appeared. Pastures that seemed rich failed to nourish stock. Cattle died of unknown diseases. Game broke down fences and trampled crops, droughts and locusts spread devastation. African labour proved unreliable and slipshod. Markets fluctuated and slumped.

"Gradually most of these things were overcome. Experiments showed which crops were suited to each varying district. Fungi and insects were studied and fought. Cattle dips were built everywhere, inoculations started. New plants were imported, new methods introduced: fertilisers, rotations, soil conservation practices all became part of the farming routine. Labour was trained, mechanisation started, co-operative marketing organised, the search for markets begun. And so on. Again, all this was due to the enterprise of settlers, assisted to some extent by the government, mainly through the work of scientists.

"The African had no part in the initiation of all this. He did not introduce the new crops, carry out the long, costly and often discouraging experiments, try new methods, or find new markets."

The picture may be over-drawn, a little highly-coloured. But in substance it is not inaccurate. A not dissimilar case can be made for the European company exploitation of mineral wealth—great capital sums were risked, all the techniques of the most advanced economy introduced. Even the migrant labour system was not the unqualified evil its opponents would make it out to be.

<sup>1</sup>*Race and Politics in Kenya* by Elspeth Huxley and Margery Perham (Faber, 1944, 12s. 6d.)

In the early stages of development there may be no alternative if the exploitation of the land's natural resources was ever to be undertaken. What was evil, what is evil is to confine the African to unskilled toil. From the migrant unskilled labour there should have grown as fast as possible a semi-skilled and skilled permanently established labour force.

Of course it is recognized that the nature of private capital investment has not always been advantageous to the indigenous peoples. It has too often been spasmodic, reflecting high-points of speculative activity in the capital markets of London, Paris, Brussels and New York. Since its objective is short-period returns, such investment has naturally never been directed to the creation of an environment favourable to the long-term, progressive development of the African peoples. It is not the function of settlers or private investors to provide the essential and basic communal services of health, education and transportation. But the taxation of private investment can and should yield the revenues for governments to carry out their duties.

The techniques for the really effective opening-up of the African continent are in some respects only now fully available. The scientific, the mechanical and not least the medical discoveries and inventions of recent decades make it possible for colonial Africa to pass through ten centuries of social and economic development almost within one generation. The African peoples are themselves totally incapable of providing the skilled administrators and technicians together with the formidable capital funds for the fundamental services of education, health and communications which are absolutely vital if primitive communities are to be transformed into modern industrial societies. The taxation revenues from European capital investment can contribute substantially. Without such European investment and enterprise there can never take place the development of natural resources which yield the flow of taxable income. But even the most economically advanced territory of Africa, the Union of South Africa does not yet provide internal taxation revenues adequate for the task—assum-

ing a willingness for the major portion of those revenues to be allotted to purely African development. In other territories the available taxation funds are of course very much less.

Development funds on the scale necessary can for the present come only from the taxpayers of the colonial powers. In view of the crushing burdens arising from the war and its aftermath the public moneys voted for the British colonial welfare fund are an impressive gesture. Whether other countries also controlling dependent African territories will be equally generous remains to be seen. But it is unreasonable to expect that the taxpayers of metropolitan areas will agree to an indefinite and unending contribution to the development of colonial areas and peoples. Obviously the objective must be that these dependent peoples should progress as fast as possible to a degree of productivity which will enable them to provide from their own expanding resources the capital for further progress.

The anthropologist may object that the rapid introduction of an economy of exchange and division of labour—a capitalist economy in the correct sense of "capitalism"—into primitive African tribes must disintegrate those communities with the most unfortunate consequences. Shall they be left in their primitive state? Is there any special virtue in primitiveness? Would the African consciously choose his own ways and standards of living in preference to the ways and standards of living of modern industrial society? It would be rash to venture a categorical judgement on a question involving such ultimate values.

But this need not prevent recognition of the *naïveté* of the idea of a slowly and progressively evolving peasant economy resting on a tribal foundation. Once remove the "natural controls" of inter-tribal warfare, disease, abandonment of the unwanted to die and the pressure on the land from men and animals becomes acute almost within a generation. Prevention of soil erosion and of destruction of soil fertility is not a panacea. The way out is the development of an economy of specialization and capitalist production in which an increasing proportion of the growing population can earn a livelihood away from the



land and outside agriculture. A cumulative interdependence with world economy and acquaintance with the techniques of an industrial, capitalist society is inevitable.

The consequences of change and adaptation to an entirely new environment must obviously be harsh and far-reaching. Even a highly developed economy and advanced people feels severely and resists strongly the impact of change. A primitive economy and a primitive social tradition simply disintegrates. It is attractive to conceive of social controls cushioning the shocks by making change in gradual, controlled steps. But the possibility of such cushioning and control raises serious doubts and it may be as well to accept the hard facts of change. In the end quick adaptation may prove the least painful.

The European immigrants first contact is with a people of primitive culture, separated from them by an immeasurable gulf of social tradition, custom and *mores*. The immediate reaction is that there cannot possibly be a mingling and an association as between peoples of common traditions and *mores*. There follows the conviction, rapidly reinforced by economic privilege, that this gulf must be perpetuated and never bridged. The "inherited" prejudice of the European for the African arises in part surely because successive generations of Europeans are born into an environment in which this chasm of violently unlike codes and manners has become fixed. The doctrine of "white supremacy" hardens and renews itself from generation to generation. Long before an acceptable standard of living is reached for the majority of Africans, the short-run interests of the Europeans are seen to lie in the restriction of economic development so that relative superiority of economic status may be perpetuated even if general economic expansion promises an absolute rise in incomes for Europeans as well as Africans.

As a consequence of European settlement there appears in each instance what Miss Margery Perham describes as "the establishment . . . of a system by which a racial minority obtains absolute

domination, political, economic and social, over the African majority . . .". But how long can such a system last? Can "white supremacy" be envisaged as possible of maintenance through the centuries to come. Surely not. Surely *at some time* in the future—twenty-five, fifty, a hundred years from now—it must be abandoned by tacit consent or overthrown by force. Is not the maintenance of "white supremacy" the ultimate stupidity and ultimate immorality of white settlement. At *some time* in the future, equality of status between African and European must come about. If common citizenship at some stage is inevitable, it seems sense then to consciously develop common traditions, customs and *mores*. Only then will it be possible for European to accept African and African to accept European unconscious of any distinctions. Is it blackness or whiteness which really separates or rooted antipathy between cultures on different levels? Eliminate and merge the cultural differences, would colour alone continue to divide?

European settlement and European investment in Africa is not in itself bad. Without the invigorating influence of European capital and techniques, Africa could not emerge from its backwardness. Indeed, without the introduction of capitalist methods of production (and of course by capitalist methods of production is meant production which uses capital, irrespective of who owns the capital or means of production), it is impossible for any progress from primitiveness to be made. Nor is it possible to assume that extra-African peoples would contribute without prospect of return a flow of purely philanthropic capital or that the Africans from their own resources could in any foreseeable period provide the essential capital. One cannot escape the conclusion that without white colonization in Africa, purely African communities would for centuries remain amongst the poorest groups anywhere in the world. But unless there is a renunciation of the doctrine of "white supremacy," such white settlement must be without ultimate moral or economic justification.



## NOTES OF THE QUARTER

Since the scope of this journal was broadened at the beginning of 1942, Professor I. Schapera of the University of Cape Town has been associated with us in its conduct, more particularly in the share of its pages devoted to social anthropology. But *African Studies*, like *Bantu Studies* before it, remained the sole property of the Witwatersrand University, which finances its publication. This fact, and the difficulties inevitably involved in having one of the editorial board, as well as the printers a long distance from the others, has led Professor Schapera to withdraw from his formal association with us. We greatly regret his decision to do so and we record our sincere appreciation of the assistance he has given us in the last few years. We are glad to have his assurance that his informal co-operation will remain available to us in future.

\* \* \* \*

We warmly welcome a new publication in the field of African Studies. The Fort Hare University Press has now published the first two numbers of Volume I of the *Fort Hare Papers*. It is intended to use this new publication for issuing from time to time the results of research of members of the University staff in African Studies. The first two numbers augur well for the standard of the series. The first, contributed by Dr. A. J. D. Meiring, Professor of Zoology, is entitled *The Significance of the Engravings of Masarwa Egg-shells*; the second, contributed by Mr. Z. K. Matthews, Professor of Social Anthropology and Law, gives *A Short History of the Tshidi Barolong*, and the third, by Mr. G. I. M. Mzamane, Assistant Curator of the F. S. Malan Museum, deals with *Some Medical, Magical and Edible Plants used among some Bantu Tribes*. No 2 is devoted to one paper (of 36 pages) giving a detailed exposition of *The Noun Class-Prefix in*

*the Sotho Group of Bantu Languages*. These two numbers appeared in June and October 1945, and are obtainable at 2s. 6s. each.

\* \* \* \*

We also welcome the appearance of a new journal in Central Africa. This is the *Bulletin de l'Institut d'Études Centrafricaines* published under the patronage of the *Gouvernement Général de l'Afrique Équatoriale Française* at Brazzaville. The journal is published in the interest of research which is being conducted more vigorously now that the war is over—a war which interrupted so tragically the research and advancement which were being encouraged by the French authorities in that area.

The first number, well printed at Brazzaville, covers about 120 pages, and has some very interesting and valuable contributions on traditional history, political and social organizations, Native art, blood grouping and other subjects. The area covered by the portion of French Africa presents a most intriguing field for research, containing as it does in the Southern portion Bantu peoples of the North-Western Bantu zone, and further North various Sudanic and intermingled Hamitic peoples.

We wish all success to this new venture, and through its auspices advancement and prosperity to the African peoples of that part of the Continent.

\* \* \* \*

We regret that the last number of *African Studies* (December 1945) reached subscribers a couple of months late. This number has also been delayed and it is possible that the June number will also be late, but we assure our readers that four numbers will in due course reach them in 1946.

## BOOKS IN REVIEW

**Customary Law of the Haya Tribe.** By HANS CORY and M. M. HARTNOLL. 1945. Lund, Humphries. 299 pp. 30s.

This compilation represents what is apparently the first attempt to reduce to writing a body of Native law in Tanganyika. It consists of 1263 short paragraphs, many of them a single short sentence, covering the usual range of topics in this field. The authors say that their task occupied nearly two years. They made and discussed a draft in consultation with Native Court assessors and then sent a Swahili version to every Chief in the area for his comments before making the final draft. They studied hundreds of cases recorded on appeal to the District Officer. The result of the labours is disappointing and the reason is supplied by themselves. "No civil code was used as a guide in the compilation of this book" they tell us, "and therefore it may be found that many points have been left out; neither was any attempt made to copy the form of a law book. The order of chapters was made with a view to the easiest arrangement for understanding by African courts. The use of a code might have meant that points foreign to customary law would arise and questioning the assessors on them might have resulted in the answers being their personal opinions and not rules of customary law."

This explains but it hardly excuses the unsatisfactory arrangement of the mass of interesting material handled. Inheritance comes first followed by the status of children and bride-price. A primary subject like the validity of marriages appears only on page 88 (paragraph 388). It is consequently hard for the reader, even if he is familiar with legal categories and modes of thought to gain anything like a picture of the legal system of these tribesmen. Nor is he assisted by a short description or even a reference to their social or political background.

"Our knowledge of the substance of Native law in East Africa is still so meagre that one must regret the publication of material in form which is so much less effective than it might have been.

The qualifications of the authors are not indicated. Presumably they are anthropologists and they are amongst the many who have not yet appreciated the need to adopt recognized legal methods of classification and, if need be, to adapt them to the recording of Native law. It is not in the long run a service to Africans to compile for them a handbook in such a fashion that "they can easily understand it", but no one else can. If African Native law is to survive, its exponents and practitioners have much to learn from the common body of law and jurisprudence practised and debated by comparative lawyers for centuries. The successful recording of Native law depends on the use of a technique that should be such as can be—and has in fact been—employed by other workers engaged on a similar task elsewhere in Africa. The International African Institute, which sponsored the volume under review, might well consider the publication of a guide to the recording of Native law. It would serve much the same broad purpose as the guide to the recording of African languages that it gave us some years ago.

J.L.

**Doctor or Witch-Doctor? The Old Medicine and the New.** By DR. G. W. GALE. Johannesburg. *South African Institute of Race Relations*. Price 3d.

Dr. Gale has had an exceptionally wide experience, first of many years of medical mission work in a rural area among the Zulus, then of municipal health service and latterly of work in the Union Public Health Department. In this seven page pamphlet the writer explains the vast "difference between the old African witch-doctor and the new educated doctor", White or Black. Seeing that the educated doctor works by reason and not by divination, he needs all the help the patient and his family can give him, both in making his diagnosis and in carrying out his treatment. The doctor should be treated with complete frankness. "He is not trying to 'catch' you, and you must not try to 'catch' him."



The pamphlet ends with a warning about "quacks".

N.M.

**Lunda Handbook.** By W. S. and M. K. FISHER.

Printed at *Mutshatsha*, Congo Belge. 1944  
178 pp. 5s.

This is a revised and much expanded edition of the Lunda grammar prepared by W. S. Fisher some twenty or more years ago. It follows a similar order, which the writers consider most convenient for teaching the language in a series of lessons, rather than a strictly grammatical order. The writers add an introductory note in which they give support to the conjunctive method of writing but have prepared the grammar in the disjunctive style used hitherto in most Lunda literature; it seems a pity that the new grammar was not taken as an opportunity to adopt conjunctive writing, which has now been accepted by workers in Lwena.

Turning to the actual text, the most unsatisfactory section, is the general introduction dealing with phonetics. The statement, "There are four main tones in Lunda, rising, falling, level and swinging," is not likely to commend itself to other students of tonetics; for Lunda, like other Central Bantu languages, has two significant tones, a low and a high, which the writers apparently classify as rising and falling. The swinging tone is said to rise and fall on one syllable, but in the word quoted as an illustration, *kalɔŋa*, the tone pattern is low, high, low. The statement that there are short, medium, long and very long vowels in Lunda is also one which will require revision, the only true long vowels being those in the last category, and the other three in the illustration quoted being tonal differences not due to length.

The first section of the book deals with the indicative mood and contains a good summary the scope and use of the various tenses, including a chart showing graphically the application of the tenses in relation to present time. A few points call for comment. On page 8 the locatives and conjunctive formative are referred to as "prepositions," and for some reason so is the conjunction

*neyi* (like, as if). The use of the terms *open* and *closed* to refer to concords according to whether they are formed with *a* or with *i* and *u* is confusing, and has prevented the authors from presenting a clear classification of the various types of concord. In dealing with the intonation of interrogative sentences, the explanations could have been made clearer by showing that the effect is achieved by the elimination of "end-fall" and decline of tone which accompanies it, when a questioning tone of voice is used.

The second section of the grammar deals with noun classes and qualificatives. The writers might have followed with advantage an order based on Meinhof's classification. The statement that the nouns composed of infinitives have a plural with the prefix *ma-* will not find much support; the illustration given is *kulota* (to dream or dreaming), plural *malota* (dreams); actually *malota* is the plural of *chilota*, one of the few nouns of the *chi-* class which form irregular plurals in *ma-*. These latter nouns, which are treated here as a special class, are merely representative of a widespread phenomenon in which, in a few cases, a noun forms its plural with a prefix which is not the usual equivalent of its singular prefix. Other examples could be quoted from the other languages allied to Lunda. The treatment of nouns denoting relationships is not very satisfactory; the irregularities in possessive stems which are sometimes found with them are well tabulated, but there is no indication that the authors are aware that many of these nouns are prefixless nouns allied to class one. Their true status was described in *African Studies*, 1944, p. 154. There is also no indication in this section of the distinction between the direct and descriptive possessive concords (see *African Studies*, 1945, pp. 88-96).

In section three of the book, it is satisfactory to see that the distinctive tone pattern of the subject concords in relative clauses is described; this appears to be common to other languages allied to Lunda. But in the relative objectival concords, the suggestion that the vowel *a* is part of the relative concord before verbs in the third person, is not a correct interpretation of the construction;



the *a* in these cases is derived from the subjectival concord, as a comparative study of allied languages demonstrates. The arrangement of the demonstratives could be improved; the so-called double relative concords are in fact demonstratives, as the form of class one singular demonstrates; whilst the so-called relative demonstrative on page 106 are copulative constructions with the copulative *dyi-* followed by noun concords. In the virtual absence of any conditional mood in Lunda and allied languages, the sequence of tenses in conditional clauses is of some interest, but there is little or no discussion of this subject in the book.

An excellent and valuable feature of the grammar is the description of the appropriate gestures to accompany certain ideophones and other expressions such as counting, a subject upon which all too little has been recorded. The book ends with a short section upon etiquette and customs, in which there is too much emphasis on the rigid observance of certain customs such as the proper way to sit. Many of these customs are by no means followed conscientiously today by the younger generation, and failure to observe them can no longer be automatically taken as a sign of bad manners or upbringing.

Among minor points, perhaps misprints, there

is noted on p. 171 *kayisansa* for the "Red-chested Cuckoo" which should be *kayisansa*, and *kabolu* for the "Wood Dove" which should be *kambolu*. A useful vocabulary is prefixed to the various lessons: on p. 53 the rendering of *wuvumbi* as "adultery" is hardly correct, *wuvumbi* being "lustfulness," without any legal connotation such as is contained in *makoji*, which more correctly renders "adultery;" and on page 169 *akishi* (ancestral spirits of the family or kindred) is rendered as "gods and goddesses."

C. M. N. WHITE.

**Notes on Form and Structure in Bantu Speech.** By E. O. ASHTON. Mem. XX 1945. *Oxford University Press for the International African Institute*. 19 pp. 2s.

This is a reprint of Mrs. Ashton's article which appeared in *Africa* in January 1945. In this she extends to Bantu generally some of the technique of approach which she used with marked success in teaching Swahili. She has illustrated the interconnexion of function and form by discussing the two "particles" which she has termed "the -A of Relationship" and "the -O of Reference." It constitutes an interesting study in Comparative Bantu Grammar.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Colonial progress in Central Africa—Belgian Congo and French Equatorial Africa. 1944. New York : Foreign Policy Association. Vol. XX No. 5. 10 pp. 25c.
- Doke, C. M. Bantu : modern grammatical phonetical and lexicographical studies since 1860. London : 1945. Lund, Humphries for the International African Institute. 119 pp.
- du Bois, W. E. B. and Johnson, Guy B. ed. Encyclopaedia of the Negro : preparatory vol. 1945. New York : Phelps-Stokes Fund. 208 pp.
- Evans-Pritchard, E. E. Some aspects of marriage and the family among the Nuer. 1945. Livingstone : Rhodes-Livingstone Institute. 70 pp. 2s.
- Hofmeyr, Jan H. Christian principles and race problems. 1945. Johannesburg : S.A. Institute of Race Relations. 31 pp. 2s. 6d.
- Humphrey, N. and others. The Kikuyu lands. 1945. Nairobi : Government Printer. 68 pp.
- Knorr, K. E. British colonial theories 1570-1850. University of Toronto Press. 406 pp.
- Moon, Bucklin T. ed. Primer for white folks. 1945. New York : Doubleday, Doran. 491 pp. \$3.50.
- Phillips, Arthur. Report on Native tribunals. 1945. Nairobi : Government Printer. 360 pp. 20s.
- Report of the commission on the administration and finances of Native locations in urban areas of Northern Rhodesia. 1944. Lusaka : Government Printer. 53 pp. 2s.
- Report of commission of inquiry into African railway strike. 1945. Salisbury. 24 pp.
- Report of investigation into grievances of African employees of the Rhodesia Railways. 1945. Lusaka : Government Printer. 14 pp.
- Report of the Royal Commission on West India (the West Indies). 1945. London : H. M. Stationery Office. Cmd. 6607. pp. 480. 7s. 6d.
- Schapera, I. and van der Merwe, D. F. Notes on the tribal groupings, history, and customs of the Bakqalaqadi. 1945. Cape Town : University School of African Studies. 191 pp. 10s.
- Strategic colonies and their future. 1945. London Fabian Publications and Gollancz. 36 pp. 1s. 6d.
- Wallis, J. P. R. ed. The Matabele journals of Robert Moffatt. Vol. 2 : 1829-1860. London : Chatto and Windus. 294 pp. 30s.
- Weaver, Robert C. Negro labor : a national problem. 1945. New York : Harcourt, Brace. \$3.
- Wilson, Godfrey and Monica. The analysis of social change. 1944. Cambridge University Press. 177 pp. 7s. 6d.

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

- W. H. STEAD is a Native Commissioner in Southern Rhodesia.
- W. BOURQUIN is a missionary working among the Xhosa in East Griqualand.
- MME RENÉ DUGAST is Secretary of the *Société d'Etudes Camerounaises* at Douala, West Africa.
- DR. M. D. W. JEFFREYS spent many years in the British Colonial Service in West Africa. He is now senior lecturer in Social Anthropology in the University of the Witwatersrand.
- RALPH HORWITZ is an economist who lives in Cape Town.



